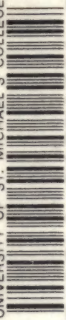


UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



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OR

THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

ADDRESSES TO YOUNG MEN, BY

JOSEPH RICKABY, S. J.

“That tower of strength
That stood four-square to all the winds that blew.”
—TENNYSON.

JOSEPH F. WAGNER

NEW YORK

1908

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PREFACE

These Addresses have appeared in the HOMILETIC MONTHLY. They are written rather with an eye to scientific accuracy than to unction, eloquence and rhetoric: for surely conduct is a matter of science.

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THE CARDINAL VIRTUES.

A Course of Addresses to Young Men

I. VIRTUE IN GENERAL

There are *infused* virtues and *acquired* virtues. These addresses deal with the latter, with the *acquired* virtues. Of *infused* virtues we shall have something to say at the end. A *virtue* is a habit of doing right; a habit of doing wrong is called a *vice*. A *habit* is a made thing, made by the free human acts of the individual. It results of acts whereof he is master, to do or not to do, and he chooses to do them. No one is born with habits. A young child consequently has neither vices nor virtues. But it has propensities both virtuous and vicious. These propensities are partly common to all men, partly peculiar to individuals, depending in the latter case on the bodily nature inherited from parents and ancestors according to what is called the law of *heredity*. Habits and acts answer to one another; but a person may do an act, good or evil, without having yet formed the corresponding habit, be it of virtue or vice. Clearly, a man may get drunk without being an habitual drunkard, or give an alms before he has mastered the virtue of liberality. Otherwise no virtue could ever be acquired; for the act must precede the habit, and the habit of virtue, or of vice, is the gradual result of a series of virtuous, or vicious, acts. But, done without habit, an act is done fitfully, irregularly, with difficulty and uncertainty and much imperfection.

The best way to understand a *habit*, and thereby to understand what a *virtue* is, is to consider what we understand by *skill*. Skill is a habit of proficiency in some art. Skill comes by practice. We are not born skilful, we are born clumsy creatures; but this native clumsiness adheres to some natures more than to others. We are born with predispositions which may be turned into skill by practice. Practice presupposes power; you can not practise running unless nature has gifted you with the use of your legs. Skill, therefore, and virtue, and every habit, presupposes power. Habit is the determinant of power, not the maker of it. The skill of a trained singer is a habit. The voice is there from the first; the most accomplished vocalist was once a squalling baby; if the baby had had no lungs and vocal chords to squall with, never could the singer's voice have been trained to melody. Every habit is in some power, and perfects that power to act equally, surely, readily, to good effect. A strong man, seizing a billiard cue for the first time, may make a cannon and pocket the balls; but he will not do that again. Only a practised and skilful player ever makes a *break* at billiards. The unskilful player, till his skill begins to come, makes only occasional *flukes*. Nor will a man who has not acquired the virtue of meekness succeed in keeping his temper, when provoked at all hours from Monday to Saturday. His is not the *skill* so to command himself. *That skill is the virtue*, which he has not yet got.

The sum of a person's habits is called his *character*. *Education* is the foundation of character. Education is chiefly of the young, because young natures are in all things more plastic. Older people are "set," as in bone and muscle, so likewise in habits. Nevertheless, habits go on growing, to a greater or less degree, throughout life; thus education itself becomes a lifelong process. Whatever we do consciously and willingly, we are apt to do it again; that

aptitude goes to build up habit. And not only what we do, but what we wilfully omit to do, when there is occasion for doing it, goes to make habit also—a habit, that is to say, of omitting. The immediate author of all a person's habits is the person himself, for habits come of personal acts, of which he is the doer. Every man thus makes his own character,—we must add, out of pre-existent materials, which he did not make, and under the influence of a surrounding atmosphere of circumstances, which he has not created. Still, though influenced and conditioned, he is not absolutely controlled by present circumstance and pre-existent fact; he acts for himself, and his acts make him the manner of man that he becomes. Hence it is possible, indeed, it not uncommonly happens, for a youth to be educated in one way by his parents and guardians, and meanwhile to be educating himself in a diametrically opposite direction. His masters put him to study; if he did study, he would grow studious and, possibly, learned; as it is, he “cuts” his lessons day by day, and is forming to himself the character, one degree worse than that of an *ignoramus*, the character of a *misologus*, hater of books and learning. Or worse still, he has to be much in chapel, for so his companions are; he hears many prayers recited, he not unfrequently goes to the Sacraments as those about him do; but because he inwardly repines at all these things, and has little or no heart in him, the virtue called religion, whereby we worship God, is not being formed in him at all, but rather the contrary vice of impiety; and so he will prove himself, when he goes out his own master, impious and irreligious, for thereunto is he self-educated.

Once acquired, a habit is not necessarily kept. An inanimate thing may be kept indefinitely, but a habit, particularly a good habit, requires the food and exercise of frequent acts, as occasion arises;

if such occasions are missed, and the acts called for are not elicited, the habit droops and goes near to dying. A habit enables us to do a thing easily. At the same time it would appear that acts which we have learnt to perform very easily go very little, if any, way toward strengthening the habit. A swimmer who could almost swim the Channel is not much improved by taking a few quiet strokes in a bath. Nor does a very meek man grow particularly in meekness by enduring the shrill cry of the newsboy in the street. A habit grows, on ground wherever it is not yet perfectly formed, by our doing that which we have not yet got thoroughly into the way of doing. Virtue is strengthened only by being exercised under trying circumstances. Virtue grows strong in conflict, and is enfeebled by ease.

No one needs to be told that bad habits are easier to form than good ones. A bad habit comes of a succession of bad acts; and to do a bad act, commonly, we have not to exert ourselves, but simply to let ourselves go. It is so easy to be wicked that one wonders how anyone could ever be vain of it; yet some people are. A bad habit is otherwise called a *vice*. A bad act is a *sin*. The sin passes, though its *guilt* (or liability before God) does not pass; the vice remains. Nay, when the sin, that is, the guilt of the sin, is taken away by penance, the vice, or evil habit, is not taken away. The vice does not put us out of grace or favor with God; only sin does that. Nevertheless the vice comes of sin, done in the past; and predisposes us to sin in the future. A pardoned sinner, one who has made a good confession, if he has committed the same sin many times over, must expect a hard struggle with the vice, or evil habit, thence resultant, still remaining in his soul. Often he will sin again and again in consequence. The only thing for him is to repent again and again, and to repent promptly. Repentance gradually will destroy not only the sin but also the vice. Not only will he be par-

done the repeated acts, but the habit will be cured. One of the commonest temptations of the young and inexperienced is the thought: "There's no use trying, I can not be good!" But you must be good, or you will lose your soul. You must swim out of this abyss of evil, or you will be drowned there and die for ever. And with God's grace, and your own good will, and God's Sacraments, you can swim out of it.

Strictly speaking, it is not the same thing to do a *good act* and to do an *act of virtue*. To do an act of virtue, I must have the virtue in my soul; but virtues (we are speaking now of the "acquired virtues") are not in the soul to start with; we start with doing good acts laboriously, fitfully, with effort and attention that does not always succeed, as we learn to play a game; gradually the good habit is formed, the *virtue*, or *skill in doing good*, is acquired; and thenceforth good acts are elicited with fair ease and regularity,—acts which are at once *good acts* and *acts of virtue*, this or that virtue according to the nature of the act.

An *act of virtue* is always done on principle, from a proper motive, not on blind, unreasoning impulse, not under mere stress of passion,—very often, indeed, in the very teeth of an impulse of passion. Still, when it can be got to work in the right direction, passion lends force to virtue and is a valuable adjunct to virtuous action. It is the office of the selective eye of reason to set passion to work in the right direction. The passions are something like the elephants that used to be employed in the ancient battles. Often in rage and terror those beasts would break from all control, and trample upon the men who had brought them into the field; at other times they did good service against the enemy, mostly, I imagine, by frightening people who knew no better, as the Romans were frightened at first sight of what they called the "Lucanian ox." It is very

well to act under passion, if you are sure you are going the right way and are not going too far.

From all that has been said it will appear that it is not enough for man to have powers; he must further acquire habits, residing in and perfecting his several powers, else he will use his powers to no good effect. Some powers, indeed, in man, do not need perfecting by habit; these are the organic and animal powers, such as circulation, respiration, digestion; these powers need no education. But all the five senses fall under the discipline of habit, as taste in a cook, hearing in a musician, touch in a pianist or a surgeon. It is not enough for a gymnast to be strong, he must acquire muscular habits of skill by dint of practice. Even walking is a habit, an acquired thing. Articulate speech is a habit founded upon that power which in a baby comes out in squalling. A baby that could not squall could never speak. There are habits in the intellect, habits of knowledge, got by study. These habits of intellect, sense, and muscle, make for the physical perfection of a man, not for his moral perfection. In other words, they perfect him toward certain particular ends, not toward the last end and final reason for human existence. In front of that final end these habits may be misdirected and abused, and are daily and continually abused. We see knowledge, skill, art and science put to the vilest uses. These habits, therefore, are not commonly called virtues. Virtue, as St. Augustine says (*De lib. arbit.* I, c. 18, n. 50) is "something that none can put to ill purpose." Put it to ill purposes, and it ceases to be virtue; thus what would be an act of liberality is not an act of that virtue if it be done, not for the proper motive of the virtue, but out of sheer ostentation. You may abuse any other habit or skill, you can not abuse a virtue.

Mere knowledge and intellectual appreciation of the right thing to

do is not virtue. Thus they were foolish philosophers who defined fortitude, "an understanding of the things that are to be feared and the things that are not to be feared." A virtue is a guarantee for the performance of the act corresponding, when occasion arises. But such knowledge is scarce any guarantee at all. The hour of danger paralyzes the knowledge in the man who has never been exercised in the act to face danger. He knows that it is foolish, even shameful, to get into a fright and fly; yet away he runs and all his philosophy with him. Virtue, indeed, supposes knowledge; it is not mere routine behavior, mere knack and rule of thumb: it is a habit acquired by practice of acting up to one's knowledge. Virtue in this resembles other habits. Skill, too, is something more than knowledge. For example, there are certain rubrics to be observed by a priest at Mass. They are comprised in quite a few pages; you might know the little book by heart, but you would blunder dreadfully if you had never practised. Nor could one ever operate as a surgeon who had simply read books on surgery. So for virtue you must understand and appreciate and keep well in your mind's eye the motives for virtuous conduct; but further you must put your hand to the work; try, and fail; blunder, and begin again; do the virtuous thing in a lame and imperfect way, with effort and difficulty, overcoming yourself to do it. In time the act will grow easy, the habit will have been acquired.

A virtue acquired is a guarantee of the corresponding act of virtue being forthcoming when called for. Not, however, an absolutely unfailing guarantee. The meekest of men has his meekness ruffled by sudden gusts of unreasonable anger. The prudence of the most prudent deserts him at times; he is taken off his guard, and behaves not altogether wisely. Stoics and other ancient philosophers expected too much of human virtue, thinking that it

should never fail to act. The mere fact of man having an animal body, liable to perturbations from within and without, is enough to threaten always and sometimes to upset, the perfect equilibrium of his virtue. For this and other reasons, as we shall see later, natural virtue needs to be eked out by the grace of God.

II. THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

We speak of a "cardinal of the Holy Roman Church" and of the "principal of the college." Both words have originally the same meaning. *Cardinal* is from *cardo*, a hinge. The college may be said to *hinge* upon its principal; and again a cardinal was originally and is to this day the principal priest of some parish-church in Rome. The cardinal virtues, then, are the principal virtues—and that in two ways. Either they are taken as the main virtues, to which all other virtues approximate and can be ultimately reduced, or they are taken for the chief *component elements* of every virtue whatsoever. In the latter sense they are spoken of as *integral* parts of virtue, their union going to make up virtue in its entirety. We will consider them in this latter sense first.

We owe the enumeration of the cardinal virtues, not to the Hebrew Scriptures, but to the Greek philosophers. Prudence, temperance, fortitude, justice, were already enumerated at Athens as far back as B. C. 400. The root idea of justice is the rendering to every man of his own. But what is a man's own? That may be said to be determined by law. Let every man have what the law allows him. Justice, therefore, is conformity to law. But the law may be said to prescribe all virtues. The saying is debatable, but it is not worth while debating it here. Every virtue, therefore, is conformable to law, and in practising any virtue a man is observing the law, and is, therefore, *just*. Hence in Scripture the "just" or "righteous" man is the law-abiding man; the virtuous man simply the "good man," in contrast with the sinner, who is a law-breaker. Again, virtue moves a man to do good steadily, regularly and constantly, even in face of difficulties. But constancy under

difficulties belongs to fortitude. There is, therefore, an element of fortitude in every virtue, by the mere fact of virtue being a habit. Once more, every virtue is a habit of doing things in moderation, holding on to the golden mean, neither overdoing the thing nor underdoing it, but doing exactly what is fit and proper under the circumstances. Such is the great Aristotelian doctrine, that all virtue lies in a mean between two vicious extremes. Liberality, for instance, observes the mean between prodigality and stinginess; fortitude between rashness and cowardice; humility between haughtiness and meanness of spirit. But moderation is the equivalent of temperance, which is thus shown to be an essential element in every virtue. It is not easy to discern the golden mean, *e. g.*, in government between remissness and over-indulgence, when to punish and when to condone, when to forbid and when to allow. Such discernment is the part of prudence. Prudence is the eye of every virtue. No virtue goes blind. Thus, to be virtuous in any department is to be at once prudent, just, courageous and temperate.

More usually, however, the four cardinal virtues are taken as four distinct virtues and main heads of virtue, under which the other virtues are severally enumerated. Under prudence come prudence in one's own affairs and prudence in the affairs of others whom one has to govern. Justice includes justice *distributive* (of rewards), *vindictive* (punishing), and *commutative* (enforcing contracts); it is further taken to include the virtues of religion, obedience, truthfulness, liberality and gratitude. Under fortitude come magnanimity, patience and perseverance. Temperance includes abstinence (in food), sobriety (in drink), chastity, also modesty, humility, meekness, clemency. The theological virtues are distinct from the cardinal, and are not considered here, as being not "acquired" but "infused."

Every habit, as we have seen, resides in some faculty or power. The habit does not make the power, any more than the school-master makes the child. It presupposes it as a thing given; then taking it in hand it disciplines and trains it and teaches it to act to good purpose; whereas, away from the good habit engendered in it by training, the power would have acted fitfully and at random. Virtue being a habit, it is possible to assign for every virtue the power in which it resides and which it perfects. We shall find the four cardinal virtues residing in the powers of the human soul. All these several powers want virtues to train them and guide them to orderly behaviour.

You sometimes hear people, who know no better, saying that all virtue is in the will. That is a mistake. Virtue is the discipline of the soul. It is not enough for the will alone to be disciplined, the subordinates must be disciplined as well as the chief, else you have no ready and regular action. Not only must the rider be skilled in horsemanship, but the horse also must be broken in. Virtue, therefore, resides even in appetite. It is put there (under God) by reason, and consists in the appetite's being habitually *broken in* to the obedience of reason. That habitual state is the result of many acts of conflict, in which reason has subdued appetite, as a trainer subdues a wild young horse. Plato expresses it in these terms: "The driver (reason), laying himself back, tugs with all his might at bit and bridle in the teeth of the wanton horse, embruining in blood his foul-mouthed tongue and jaws, forcing him back on his haunches till his legs and hindquarters almost touch the ground, and putting him to pain." Plato thought, and thought rightly, that the discipline of the lower appetites, otherwise known as the virtue of temperance, is not established without strong and repeated efforts on the part of reason, or the rational appetite, that

is, the will, to enforce obedience to its commands. It may be added that the obedience of appetite to reason is never quite complete. Temperance is like a sovereign insecurely seated on his throne, and needing, when rebellion waxes high, to call in the aid of a superior power. The habit will not work automatically: it is not self-sufficient.

Justice regulates our dealings with other persons. Fortitude and temperance work within the self, and secure order at home. As for prudence, there is no department of human action which prudence should not pervade. Therefore, it has been said: "Temperance and fortitude in the home department; justice for foreign affairs; with prudence for premier."

The question has been asked whether the virtues are separable one from another, whether, for instance, one can be courageous without being temperate, or exercise liberality while neglecting religion? If the four cardinal virtues are taken, not as distinct virtues, but as common elements of all virtue, it is clear that they can not be separated. In all virtue discretion (prudence), rectitude (justice), moderation (temperance), and firmness (fortitude) are inseparably conjoined. The question can be raised only when the virtues are considered as distinct from one another. One cardinal virtue is not another, *e. g.*, justice is not fortitude, that we allow. May not in the same person one of these virtues flourish in the absence of one or more of the other three? Does not plain experience evince that the sailor is brave, but not temperate; and that many a man is temperate, and just to fellowmen, but not just to God in that he wholly discards the virtue of religion? In answer to this somewhat intricate question we must distinguish between a virtue and the good acts which that virtue is apt to elicit. Those acts, as we have seen, may be done in the absence of the virtue: a

man may show liberality once in a while without having the virtue of liberality. Much more may he do acts of liberality here and there, without having some other virtue, as temperance or religion. A man of no religion may subscribe handsomely to a hospital—it may be, I allow, out of the virtue of liberality, but his mere subscription is no certain argument of that virtue. The act may be motivated by ostentation or human respect and fear of public opinion; or he may give out of a certain native predisposition to fling his money about, a predisposition which makes excellent material for virtue, but is not of itself the virtue of liberality before it has been trained according to reason. What seems to be virtue may be a mere chance combination of good nature with happy circumstances. What seems to be virtue may keep up the semblance only because it has never been tried by temptation. It may be a keeping up of appearance out of love of respectability and desire to make one's way in society; and that is not virtue. Still I would not deny that a man may have one virtue and not another—liberality, for instance, and not religion—provided his lack of that second virtue be due wholly or chiefly to ignorance, misapprehension, weakness and frailty. But if a man casts any one virtue which carries duties in its train—casts it out wilfully and against his conscience—I should gravely doubt his possession of any other virtue. However much he did the acts, I should doubt whether they were motivated by the motive of the virtue. A man who spurns conscience upon one ground is not likely to be really conscientious upon another. Henry VIII affected zeal for religion and for the sanctity of marriage. His loose and dissolute life gave the lie to his zeal. What shall we say of Louis XIV? We must be cautious in judging of individuals. But this we may observe in general. Virtues are like the timbers of a roof. Dry rot, set in on one beam, does

not at once bring the whole roof down. Nor does the decay of one particular virtue work the immediate ruin of a man's whole moral character and destroy all his other virtues, the gradual growth of years of well-doing. They may remain some considerable time uninjured. But evil spreads, and things move from bad to worse.

By doing our duty we do acts, from which acts virtues are apt to result. Nor is a sinner condemned precisely for his vices, but for those sinful acts which have engendered vices in his soul. We are not bound to do all good acts possible, else there would be no difference between counsel and commandment. Good acts indeed are often inconsistent one with another. It is good to marry, good to receive holy orders; but you can not do both. In every good man, grown up, there will be found the cardinal virtues, but not every subordinate virtue which ranks under those general heads. Some virtues he may not have been in a position to practise. You can not practise clemency if you have no authority to punish; nor munificence if you are not a rich man. Some virtues grow out of acts which are rarely practicable or obligatory—magnanimity, for example, which is the maintenance of a proper attitude of mind in reference to high honors. Some virtues are as the garments of the soul, covering its nakedness and its shame; others are as jewelry; now no one is obliged to wear jewelry.

The ancient Greeks, who first made out the list of cardinal virtues, also enumerated four corresponding goods of man. They were health, strength, beauty, and what we may call a competence, or a competent position in society. Fortitude and temperance evidently answer to strength and beauty respectively: they are spiritual strength and beauty. The drunkard, or the unchaste youth, is morally and spiritually ugly, though he perceive it not: higher powers perceive it. The Greeks said: "Vice is unknown to itself."

Prudence is the being of sound mind and sound judgment in matters of primary importance. Prudence takes "a healthy view" of the general situation. Justice is the moral attribute that fits us to be members of human society; for no society, not even that of thieves, could hold together, were the members all unjust to one another. In this, justice is like a "competence," which means a place in the social organism, with associates and friends to converse with, and sufficient pecuniary substances to maintain the position honorably.

Or we may put the relation in this way. Prudence is the safeguard of health; fortitude keeps up strength; temperance, which includes chastity, is the defender of beauty; while justice prevents a man abusing his worldly wealth and position. So that, without the cardinal virtues, health, strength, beauty and social competence, may prove a curse rather than a blessing to the owner. And the same of all other corporal and material advantages.

III. PRUDENCE

Prudence is right reason applied to practice in view of the final end of life. Prudence is apt to give advice on points that appertain to the whole life of man and his last end; while in any given art there is the office of advising on points that appertain to the proper end of the said art. Hence some persons, as being apt to give advice on matters of war or seamanship, are called *prudent* commanders, or *prudent* navigators, but not *prudent* absolutely; but they alone are prudent absolutely who give good advice for the main conduct of life.

An imprudent person is one who goes the wrong way about getting what he wants, and in consequence does not get what he wants. He has no practical discernment of the bearing of given means on a given end. That is exactly what prudence does discern. Prudence is concerned with means to ends, not with ends in themselves. Prudence supposes the end, and that a good end, namely, as has been said, the final end of human life, which is in fact man's chief good. To take means cunningly to a bad end is not the virtue of prudence; it is called in Scriptural language the *prudence of the flesh*. St. Paul says: *The prudence of the flesh is death* (Rom. viii, 6); and the author of Proverbs warns us: *There is no prudence against the Lord* (Prov. xxi, 30). The most imprudent thing for man is to do anything that involves the loss of his soul, though by it he gain kingdoms. Hence the instruction with which a Retreat usually opens, on the end and purpose for which man was created, is really a lesson in prudence.

Prudence may be called an *intellectual virtue*, inasmuch as it has its seat in the understanding: but inasmuch as it directs the under-

standing to a practical purpose, it is a *moral virtue*. *Art* also resides in the understanding, and directs it to a practical purpose; but *art* is concerned with *production*, prudence with *conduct* or *behaviour*. Prudence, then, is not mere speculation. He who sees the right way to take, but takes it not, can not be called a prudent person. He may be a philosopher, or a critic, but he is not prudent. Nor does prudence merely lay down general principles, but it directs their application to a particular case: for prudence is a practical virtue, and all practise is in particulars. In that it is like conscience. In fact, prudence may be called a well-enlightened conscience, in so far as conscience has to do with the future.

None of the other three cardinal virtues can work without prudence. Prudence must enlighten them in their action, pointing out the measure of temperance, the bounds of fortitude, the path of justice, everywhere indicating the golden mean, which other virtues aim at, but which prudence alone discerns. Without prudence virtue would go ablundering and aslumbering in the dark; true virtue walks with eyes open, knowing what it is about, what it wants and why: now the open eye of virtue is prudence. On the other hand, prudence itself perishes in the absence of temperance, fortitude, and justice. For prudence is a guide only to a good end practically desired. But the soul unendowed with habits of temperance, fortitude, and justice, readily fixes its desires on evil ends—on base and immoderate pleasures, on fraudulent gains, or hair-brained enterprises, or cowardly escapes; and in reference to all such ends, as we have seen, there is no prudence, though there may be considerable cunning.

There is imprudence in every sin, inasmuch as every sin is an aberration and a swerving from our last end. But the name of imprudence is specially reserved for sins more obviously characterized

by recklessness, folly, and want of thought, such as many of the excesses of youth. It was a saying of the old philosophers that "passion mars the judgment of prudence." Indeed we need no philosophers to tell us that; it is matter of daily experience. Under excitement we lose our heads. This shows how prudence differs from mere knowledge, and from the critical faculty whereby we judge of the conduct of others. In their cooler moments men commonly discern well enough the ways of wisdom from the ways of folly, and coolly mark and stigmatize an acquaintance who is treading the latter path. A much rarer gift is the keeping of knowledge before our eyes in time of action, so as to judge rightly, and act rightly, and not be borne away by a blind impulse. That habit of having your knowledge available in action is the virtue of prudence. In doing wrong a man does not act according to his knowledge, he looks the wrong way; like a perverse scholar, he raises his eyes from his book and cites his text incorrectly. *The land is made desolate because there is none that thinketh in his heart* (Jerem. xii, 11).

The matters in which a young man most needs the restraint of prudence are (1) the care of his health, (2) the use of his time, (3) the spending of his money, (4) the choice of his books, (5) the making of friends, (6) the giving away of his heart, affections and love, (7) the election of a state of life. There is such a thing as being what is called "hipped" (hypochondriacal), absurdly anxious about one's health. This weakness in a young man is pitiful, happily also rare. Many a young man conducts himself, as the Greeks said, "like an immortal," as though nothing could possibly impair his strength, and disease were for him forever out of the question. Some are thus reckless in giving themselves to work, but far more in the pursuit of pleasure. Late hours, strong drink, excessive

tobacco, mad excitement, are undermining their strength, shortening their days, storing disease in their system, while they heed it not. And worse things still are befalling their immortal souls. Prudence is flung to the winds, and every other virtue thrown after it. Many who avoid these grosser excesses overeat themselves; some neglect exercise, a neglect for which they must pay dearly in later life; some, an increasing number perhaps, overdo their exercise, put so much into muscle that the brain languishes and mental labour becomes impossible. And some overstrain heart and arteries. *Bodily exercise profiteth but little*, wrote St. Paul (I Tim. iv, 8), in an age and country of athletes. Ask yourself: "Am I going to be a professional?" "No; a lawyer, doctor, engineer." Then train accordingly. In middle age, to look no further, the training of an athlete will profit you little, if it has ousted all other training. Stiffening limbs and a stagnant mind make a sad contemplation 'for one's fiftieth birthday. Even in this world the mind should outlive the body.

One almost hesitates to preach prudence in the spending of money, lest one should seem to recommend avarice, that *love of money* which the Apostle pronounces to be *the root of all evil* (I Tim. vi, 10). But avarice is not characteristic of youth. The not buying too many attractive things for yourself, the occasional going without something that you would like and might very well have, is an excellent formation in the way of prudence. More especially excellent is it if a poor neighbour and not yourself reaps the pecuniary profit of your saving. Almsgiving, in fact, is a practical method of hitting upon the golden mean between extravagance and miserliness. I once heard a dispute in a railway carriage as to the nature of charity, or almsgiving. One man would have it that charity consisted in giving away what you did not want.

The other contended that the only true charity was giving away what you did want. At least there can be no doubt which of these two charities is more like the charity of Christ, who for us gave away His life-blood.

He has not a prudent care of his health who eats any and all things, and that without stint or measure. Not more prudent—nay, even less prudent, erring in a graver matter—is he who devours every book, magazine or paper that he finds at a railway book stall, or even in less reputable places. Surely it is a good rule neither to eat trash nor to read it. A well-fed man perhaps may venture on a little trashy food-stuff now and again; but what becomes of him whose staple diet is trash? Ask your doctor. And if a Catholic reads promiscuously socialist tracts, sickening love stories, sensational murders, divorce cases, blasphemies against the Bible or against the goodness of God, but never a book of devotion or of Catholic instruction, scarce even a Catholic newspaper except for politics, will he not soon become a spiritual dyspeptic? The poison of all this bad nutriment gets into his blood: on the smallest irritation the sore breaks out, he dies to God and to His Church, and is a Catholic no longer. To warrant your reading a book it is not enough that everyone is talking about it. Books come and go like songs, nay, they do not stay so long. Who will be talking about this favorite flashy production this time next year? Read rather what promises to be of permanent value to heart and mind. A venerable Vicar Apostolic was once dining at the table of a great lady. She asked him whether he had read a certain book, which was making a great stir at the time. He answered drily: “No, madam, I durst not.” On the other side you will find people who dare not read Catholic books, nor listen to the reproaches of their

own conscience. They think it imprudent to be very conscientious, or to hear a message from Rome.

When not coerced, a man is ruled by his first principles and by his friends. By an act of free will he may break away from either, when he thinks it worth his while to deliberate and make up his mind anew; but he will not ordinarily do so. It is matter, therefore, of the highest prudence what first principles, or maxims of conduct, we admit, and what friends we choose. We need eminently good principles and good friends. Destitute of principles, or having none but bad ones, a man is called "unprincipled." Destitute of friends, a man is "friendless"; he, too, is in a bad way, however rich and powerful he may otherwise be. If friendship be not exactly a virtue, at least it is a means to the better exercise of all the virtues; everything is done better by being done in concert. You should have friends, if you can find them. Friends are not to be found like blackberries, growing in every hedge. They have to be sought and picked with care; and in some forlorn situations good friends are not to be found at all: one has to fall back upon God alone, like Daniel among the lions. The first stage of friendship is acquaintanceship; it is often impossible, often undesirable, to pass beyond that stage. An acquaintance passes into a friend, when we not only know him but lead him, and in turn are led by him. I am not defining friendship, but this mutual leading and being led is at least part of its essence. He is not your friend, who will never alter his course one point at your suggestion. A pair of friends are not often of equal power. Usually, one on the whole leads, and the other on the whole is led, though under protest. It is a responsibility to lead; it is a risk to be led. Responsibility and risk should both be taken up with prudence. Therefore,

be prudent in making friends. And what shall I say of prudence in making love? Not to make it to one who never can be your wife, or who, you are resolved, never shall be your wife, is a point of prudence and one or two other virtues besides. The Catholic Church dislikes mixed marriages; yet they often become a necessity. It is prudent to hold off from such necessity while you may, while the matter is only in its first stages: later on it will be too late. Antecedently to any definite engagement, a Catholic man should desire a Catholic wife; and this desire should be a true wish and preference. On this whole matter there is a homely proverb to bear in mind, "Marry in haste and repent at leisure."

Yet prudence does not always hesitate and hold back. Cases occur in which it is the highest prudence to venture all. Cases occur in which it is a mistake to dwell on restraining considerations—at a charity sermon, for example. It is prudent not to rely on one's own prudence exclusively. We must consult God in prayer, and that earnestly and at some length in important matters. We must take advice in novel situations and under difficulties and temptations never 'experienced before. Our blessed Saviour in the cruel surprises of His agony in the garden—the surprise of human sin all laid at His door—received in humility the comforting words of the angel, and thrice went to His disciples to seek support from them. He prayed and sought counsel. He condescended for our imitation. On the eve of conflict He was prudent.

IV. TEMPERANCE

Temperance is the virtue contrary to the two deadly sins of gluttony and lust. As against the former it represents abstinence, or moderation in solid food generally, and sobriety, which is moderation in the particular matter of intoxicating drinks. In a scientific treatment of this virtue we must not be led away by newspaper association. Temperance is not the exclusive appanage of temperance societies and teetotalers. Temperance does not mean total abstinence, and abstinence is quite independent of Fridays and flesh meat. Temperance is the sum of the three subordinate virtues of abstinence, sobriety and chastity.

Temperance is a habit residing in the sensitive appetite, when that appetite has come to be "broken in" by frequent acts of self-restraint. For these acts we have occasion every day; so that every day we should be growing in temperance. If we are failing to do that we must be growing into the habits which make the contrary vices: gluttony, drunkenness and lust.

Appetite unrestrained easily carries man to the extreme of excess. Here, then, is the good of temperance. It is solely a restraining, not an impelling virtue. Against the extreme of *too little*, appetite is its own guardian. Against the extreme of *too much* appetite is restrained by the habit of temperance, gradually brought to reside in it, formed and planted there, by repeated acts of reason and will, forcing appetite back into due bounds, till at last appetite of itself, like a tamed beast, is more or less apt not to exceed the just limit. Then the man is said to be "temperate."

It may be asked how it is that temperance seems sometimes to push men into an extreme, not merely restraining appetite, but

refusing it altogether. Thus the total abstainer refuses the craving for strong drink entirely; he never will gratify it. The priest and the religious renounce even the lawful indulgences of the married state. We reply by the enunciation of a principle which the old sixteenth-century Protestantism stupidly repudiated—that besides commandment there is counsel, and that not every act morally praiseworthy is also obligatory. Where duty ends generosity begins. Not every virtue lies between two vicious extremes immediately conterminous with itself, but sometimes there is a further virtue intervening between that virtue and the vicious extreme. Thus between justice and the vicious extreme of prodigality there intervenes the further virtue of liberality. Liberality may be styled a more excellent justice, and virginity (in the present order of providence) a more excellent chastity. But observe, the main central virtue, as justice, is for all men to practise; the more excellent virtue, as liberality, is not for all, and in some cases it would be a mistake to attempt it. We say well, be just before you are generous. Further, the golden mean is not the same for all persons. Half a bottle of wine is not too much for some men to drink, for others it would be a sinful excess. For some persons total abstinence from spirituous liquors is not a work of supererogation, it is a downright duty. They have lost the ability to drink in moderation; and their only way of remaining sober is by never touching alcohol in any shape. They may be likened to patients where doctors forbid them to touch flesh-meat. One mutton chop is too much for Henry, and one-half pint of beer is more than can be safely allowed to George. What looks like an extreme is sometimes no more than the golden mean of duty for this particular individual; sometimes it is a feat of generosity, still in the golden mean, for that mean is not a forever fixed

point. But, as I have said, such generous outrunning of duty can not be inculcated indiscriminately in all cases. In some it would be downright folly, or even wickedness. Not all men and women are fit for the religious state. It is questionable whether total abstinence should be preached to all as a counsel, certainly not to all as a duty. We have no right to add an eleventh commandment. To say this much is not to deny that for many in their youth total abstinence is an excellent counsel; that for many grown men, never themselves the victims of drunken habits, but obliged to live in the society of free drinkers, total abstinence is a great preservative. The simple words, "I am a total abstainer," have kept many a man and many a youth out of a den of infamy. Still, be it remembered, total abstinence is not the sum and substance of all Christian virtue. Though hell be full of drunkards, still heaven is not the birthright of every total abstainer. It is a weakness of human nature to expect one virtue to do duty for all.

As regards the vices opposite to temperance, an important distinction is to be drawn between him who sins by outbursts of passion and him whose very principles are corrupt. The former in doing evil acknowledges it to be evil, and is prone to repent of it afterwards; the latter has lost his belief in virtue and his admiration for it; he drinks in iniquity like water, with no after-qualms; he glories in his shame. The former is reclaimable, the latter is reprobate—at least it takes a miracle of divine grace to reclaim him: his intellect as well as his heart is vitiated: faith and works, fine feeling and sense of honour, all have gone by the board. No hard and fast line of division, however, can in every case be drawn between sinning from passion and sinning on principle; but cases of the one shade into cases of the other, and by frequent indulgence of passion principle is brought gradually to decay.

Sinning daily and not repenting, a man loses his good principles. But repenting daily, or frequently, he keeps them.

The chief sins against temperance are drunkenness and impurity. The evil of drunkenness consists in voluntarily parting with your reason in such a way that under this induced privation of reason, and under the influence of the stimulant, you are likely to do acts contrary to reason and God's law. It is true that in the act of doing them you are not your own master: but in the renouncement of control over yourself, and submission to the blind control of liquor, you were your own master, and there and then in parting with your reason you sinned. You have let the tiger loose, you can not get him back to his cage; meanwhile you are responsible for his devastations. There is no crime of murder, or lust, or irreligion, that may not be committed in drunken fury. This holds good even of one solitary act of deliberate drunkenness: but when we come to consider the condition of the house and family of the habitual drunkard, the case comes out worse. Quite unnecessary here to describe the interior of a house where father drinks, or mother drinks, or both. Quite unnecessary to visit the home for inebriates, or the lunatic asylum. *To whom is woe? to whose father is woe? to whom brawling? to whom pitfalls? to whom wounds without cause? to whom bloodshot eyes? Is it not to them that linger over their wine, and make a business of emptying cups? Look not on the wine when it is golden, when its colour gleameth in the glass; it goeth in pleasantly, but in the end it will sting like a serpent, and spread poison like an asp. Thine eyes shall see strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things; and thou shalt be as one who slumbers in the midst of the sea, and as a steersman fallen asleep that has lost the helm. And thou shalt say, They have beaten me, but I had no pain, they hauled*

me, but I felt it not; when shall I arise and find wine again? (Prov. xxiii, 29-35).

St. Thomas quaintly enumerates as “daughters,” *i. e.*, effects, of gluttony and drunkenness—inept mirth, buffoonery, uncleanness, much talking, and dulness of mind for intellectual things. Had the saint seen much of the dwellings of drunkards, he might have enumerated more “daughters” and worse.

Drunkenness is the disgrace of man, but it is the ruin of woman. Those poor creatures who infest our streets are nearly all of them victims of drink. They are either actually under its effects or are seeking money to get it. This, at least, is the case with the poor; of the well-to-do one had better not speak. If a woman of the humbler sort is safe from liquor, she is safe from shame and public misery. Any Catholic man who is sober, frugal, and industrious, has married a good wife, and approaches the Sacraments regularly, is fairly safe against the sin of impurity. But drink spoils all. More than worse sins, drunkenness preys upon the physical system, upon the nerves and brain; and through the interconnection of body and mind the physical disease carries with it an impotence of will, a thorough untrustworthiness under any solicitation or temptation, so that the one chance for so debilitated a subject is entire flight from every occasion of sin—not an easy thing to realize as life ordinarily goes. Without being a religious, this person has come to need the graces and also the restrictions of religious life, simply to keep him in the path of the commandments.

Still it must be confessed that, away from all abuse of alcohol, in many circumstances of age, temperament, employment and company, chastity is a most difficult virtue to practise. *Quotidiana pugna*, “a daily battle,” says St. Augustine, and he adds, *rara vic-*

toria, "seldom victorious." Seldom victorious, if we measure victory by the Christian standard, the standard of Christ Himself (Matt. v, 27-30), which requires chastity in every human act, seen or unseen, chastity in every word, chastity in every deliberate thought and desire. The world pronounces this an unattainable ideal and substitutes another of its own setting up, the standard of respectability. The standard may be formulated thus: "Do as you like, so long as you do it on the quiet, and do not upset the peace of families; there must be no scandals." This is a fair standard, *if* we are to be judged by the world only. But if, after the world has done with us and we with the world, *we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the proper things of the body* (or, as the Greek has it, *the things incurred through the body*), *according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil* (II Cor. v, 10)—then it will be wise of us to live up to the law that is administered in that court wherein we shall be tried finally and sentenced irrevocably. We must not give in to the suggestion of the flesh and of the world, that this is an impossible law to observe. How do they know? Neither world nor flesh has ever made any serious effort to observe the law. We may repeat in a nobler arena the answer made by a British officer, when told that the capture of a certain position was impossible: "Impossible? why, I have got the order in my pocket." We have the command of God, and that can not be impossible—with His grace. About grace, this is not the occasion to speak; let that topic stand over. Grace will never enable us to dispense with the measures dictated by natural prudence. These we will consider; and as the difficulty is undeniably great, and the danger serious, these precautions must be adopted in all earnestness. First, then, we must have a clear understanding of the lie of the law. That is so important that it

shall be made the subject of our next address. For the moment I say: Keep your will habitually firmly bent on good, and confirm it by repeated acts. Keep your understanding active on topics innocent, interesting, and elevating. Keep your imagination clean, so far as it lies under the dominion of your will. Keep your eyes from the curious study of objects unchaste and provocations of evil desire. You can not help seeing many such; you need not stare at them and con them over. Surely it is not your custom to stare at every person you meet as though you were a backwoodsman, and a fellowman were a novelty. You may see and not look hard, hear and not listen or show interest. You are master of your amusements, if not of your employment and work: where do you go to enjoy yourself? where do you spend your evenings? what theatre do you patronize? what music? Avoid artificial incentives to sin. *Let no temptation take hold of you but such as is human, or part of the ordinary course of human nature; and God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able, but will make with temptation issue that you may be able to bear it* (I Cor. x, 13). Aim at being too busy for temptation to settle on you; labour hard in your profession, have hobbies, take exercise, be manly and play out-of-door games. But remember—be this said by way of warning, not of reprobation—for the matter of purity, athletes have dangers all their own.

V. HUMAN ACTS

Not everything that a man does is a human act. A perfect idiot does no human acts, nor a child that has not come to the use of reason, nor a man asleep or under an anesthetic. Things that we do mechanically, automatically, without thinking, have little of the human act about them. The beating of the heart is not a human act, nor digestion, nor respiration for the most part. "Human act," then, is a technical term; and a thorough understanding and bearing in mind of this technicality is a wonderful encouragement under temptation, and a great safeguard against scruples. A human act is an act of which a man is master, to do or not to do: it is an act of free will. It is an expression of self. It is a man's own act, not of other agents about him. It is not an organic process going on in his body: it is an output of his soul and spirit. Man is responsible to God for all his human acts, and to his fellowman for many of them: and for none but his own human acts is any man responsible. What is not a human act can never be a sin. What is not a human act can never be an act of virtue, nor go towards the building up of a habit of virtue. Only through his own human act can a man ever come to the torment of hell-fire. When a man has sinned actually and grievously, some human act on his part is a necessary condition of divine forgiveness. No temptation, as such, is ever a human act on the part of the tempted. No temptation, therefore, whatever feeling it involves, however vehement and protracted, is ever a sin. Sin is a human act of consent to temptation, a consent whereof the man was master to give or refuse it, a consent which is no blind vehemence of appetite, but an act discerned by the under-

standing and conscience for its value and significance before God, and so sanctioned by the free will.

In man's mind and body, then, a vast number of things go on which are not human acts. The soul, philosophers say, is a simple substance; but, then, they are speaking of the soul as separate from the body, in which condition we know about it wondrous little. In the body the soul is the "form" of a highly complex organism, and in its operations, if not in its substance, it becomes as complex as the body which it informs. That accounts for certain facts of pathology, which to-day are receiving much attention—I mean the resolution, in nervous disease, of one personality into three or four seeming personalities at variance with one another. This disintegration may perhaps be accounted for as a fact of ordinary experience abnormally magnified and exaggerated by disease. All men have their moods, often conflicting moods. We hear people saying such things as this: "I feel quite a different man on Sunday from what I am on a weekday." When we feel good (the "Dr. Jekyll" of Stephenson's story), we have to dread the return of the "other fellow" ("Mr. Hyde"), who feels anything but good. Not unfrequently both Jekyll and Hyde, both the good and the bad man in us, seem to be present together, or in quick succession, and there arises a fierce conflict. Alas for the "simple substance" of the philosophers! There seem to be two men in one struggling for the mastery. This situation may readily pass into sin through the weakness of the will. Or the will may stand firm, and the temptation remain a temptation, and nothing more. In the latter case you have what Aristotle calls *enkrateia* and St. Thomas *continentia*. Where there is sin, but as yet no habit of sin, you have *akrasia*. Aristotle says that *akrasia* is not wickedness, meaning that it is not a vice. There is much on this subject in the pages of St. Augustine. The

classical passage on it is Romans vii, 5 *sq.* What fact shall make all the difference between temptation and sin? What remains to mark the unity of human nature under these divisions? If the man falls physically into two parts, or becomes wholly other than the man he was, his responsibility ceases. The original man can not be taxed with the doings of the man that has supplanted him, nor of the part that has asserted its independence and seceded from him. But it is not true that the man does fall physically into two parts, or becomes wholly other than the man he was. Unity remains, and the centre of unity, government. The act of government, decisive and authoritative, is the human act. That act emanates from one only of the conflicting elements within the man, his will. It is an act of will, it comes of will, not of blind passion and sense. For the nonce it is but ill obeyed: its voice is heard but in a narrow region, while rebellion rages all around; but the rebels will return to their duty if the will remains firm.

Meanwhile its utterance suffices in the ethical order to render all their proceedings nugatory and invalid—racial, not personal; physical, not moral. Young and inexperienced souls are poorly alive to these distinctions: they little understand how narrow at times is the circle of will-power, the theatre of responsibility. Finding so much of their nature for the moment beyond their control, they draw the blind and cowardly inference that all control is impossible. They fancy that they have sinned, that they can not but sin, and seeking no further to restrain themselves they actually do sin. Taking temptation for sin, and finding no escape from temptation, they accept sin as inevitable. Christians though they be, with the light of Christian teaching at hand, and the strength of Christian Sacraments within them, yet they go with the pagan multitude: *having their understandings darkened, through the ignorance that is in*

them, in despair they give themselves over to impurity, to the working of all uncleanness in unchecked lustful desire (Ephes. iv, 17-19, Greek text).

A number of small advantages gained, week by week, over an enemy in the field may, in the end, necessitate that enemy's entire surrender. A great "turn-over" in trade is made by an accumulation of small gains, so small that the particular transaction which brought in each seemed hardly a gain at all. And so it is with the training of appetite. The will in particular conflicts can do little; it fights what look like drawn battles. But in the long run the power of good will shows itself. Appetite, so blustering and domineering, by a series of steady resistances is brought low and tamed. This tamed condition of appetite, as we have so often found occasion to say, is the virtue of temperance. A medical man once wrote: "No appetite is really so amenable to reason as the sexual propensities." And generations of virtuous men have verified the observation.

Here, as so often, a thing that is called hard is done or not done, according as people go the right or the wrong way about the doing of it. The right way to go about resisting temptation is to behave well out of temptation and stand fore-armed against its assaults. Many things that are not free at the time they come upon us are said to be free *in causa*, "free in their cause," having been caused by some free act of ours, as a man may catch a fever by going into an infected room; if he knew what he was doing, his fever is "free in its cause," not in its actual access. And this doctrine carries us in sight of cases that frequently occur and are hard to settle. Their settlement must be sought at proper sources as they occur. A few general principles alone can be laid down here. Although temptations are often "free in their cause," yet we are not

bound to avoid every cause that may bring on temptation. A rule like that would make life an intolerable burden. We have to consider whether the cause be naturally allied to the temptation, whether it be of itself as it were the beginning of the sin. That would be a cogent reason for avoidance. Again, the likelihood of our yielding to the temptation or withstanding it must be reckoned with in each case. We should fly from what brings on a temptation to which we are pretty certain to yield. Again, consider whether the exciting cause be an action which would be pronounced a "queer thing to do" for a person in our position, or whether it be a thing which good men, our equals, ordinarily and laudably do. As a rule, apart from special proneness to sin, what is laudable and lawful in our equals is lawful also in us, temptation or no temptation. But we should not do "queer" things. This rule, not to do "queer" things, is a rule of high practical value. A cause "naturally allied to temptation" would be the prolonged and curious study of nude figures with which we had no professional concern; the reading of a book whose whole good was its badness; the looking on at a play the point of which was the continual covert suggestion of evil. On the other hand, service in a smart cavalry regiment has its temptations, yet they are not "naturally allied" to such service, they are not part and parcel of it as such. Moreover, that service is entered by good men of your own standing, and none blames them for it. Some may foresee in the service certain temptations which, with their character, are pretty sure to be fatal. These we exhort to go elsewhere; or, if go to the army they must, we devise for them special spiritual aids and precautions. In the language of the Catechism this avoidance of temptations "free in their cause" is called the avoiding of "occasions of sin." Such occasions are distinguished as "remote" and "proximate." The latter only are

we bound to avoid, when we can; or to fortify ourselves against by special precautions, when we can not.

The will is free, as is supposed in the very definition of a "human act." At the same time the will is weak. It is weak against any strong motive presented from without, except it be armed by a strong habit of resistance, engendered by many acts of resistance, against such motive. Such a habit is a part of character. Character, then, which is something lasting, permanent, chronic, is a fortification against motive, impulsive, transient, acute. Any motive may be strong against an unformed character, that is, in the absence of character: but where character has been formed and exists, those motives alone are strong which fit the character. Those motives are strong which chime in with pre-existent habits. The issue of a battle, fought, say, on the second of February, depends immediately upon the skill of the commander and the valor of the soldiery that day. Remotely, however, and quite as effectively, it may depend upon some operations conducted the previous Christmas. The battle was half decided ere ever it was fought. So with human acts. Not in the fierce rush of temptation only, but in the quiet current of ordinary life, a man's fidelity is tried. Such as he is silently making himself, such he will come out, when proved.

To live habitually up to a high standard of holiness is the sole way of making oneself safe against a sudden access of temptation. Therein lies the meaning of Our Lord's injunction: *Watch, and what I say to you, I say to all, watch* (Mark xiii, 35-37). The reason why people sin so easily when they are tempted is because they are too easy-going in daily life and habitually aspire too low. Knowing that none is ever sent to hell except for great wickedness, they fancy they may safely indulge themselves in everything, great wickedness alone excepted. They forget that at times

a great fight is needed to keep out of great wickedness. Temptation is sudden: the occasion for a great fight comes unexpectedly; and they are not ready. Many of us have lived through visitations of influenza. We are familiar with the process: influenza, pleuropneumonia, and then? Much depends on the violence of the attack, much on prompt retirement and careful nursing; ultimately all may turn on the vigour of the patient's constitution. Some constitutions seem bound to succumb to the first serious assault. Our character is our spiritual constitution. It is not made *for us*, as the Owenites said: it is daily being made and modified *by us*, by means of our daily human acts. Countless tiny shell-fish build up a coral-reef, or a chalk cliff; and countless acts make in time a character. Little acts come and go unnoticed; the result endures; and in the end we are surprised at its magnitude and permanence. Our daily acts, then, must be well done, excellently well done, at least with such excellence as is within our reach; in this daily excellence lies our eternal salvation. *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown up, it is greater than any herbs, and becometh a tree* (Matt. xiii, 31, 32). And conversely, of the reign of Satan in the heart.

A strong character, for good or evil, is built up by the doing of many human acts. Weakness of character is the result of habitually neglecting to exercise the will, neglecting to energize and assert oneself, drifting down stream, passive when the current sets in to evil, listless even in lawful obedience when the stream happens to flow the right way. Self-assertion is not necessarily disobedience. The highest obedience is to assert yourself in the way commanded; to throw yourself, heart and soul, will and intelligence, into the work prescribed. St. Thomas says there may be sin in mere inaction, in

simply not rising to the emergency when the hour has struck, without any positive determination not to rise. Inaction certainly prepares the way for sin, and for consent to all temptation. A good Christian is continually asserting himself, under God, against the world and the flesh and the devil. He is a man of many acts—not so much of external, palpable, active achievements, “copy” for the newspaper correspondent, as of unregistered, ever-recurring determinations of thought and will to God.

VI. OF FORTITUDE

Like temperance, the virtue of fortitude also has its seat in the irrational appetite. That appetite sovereignly desires whatever makes for the maintenance of the animal nature in the individual and its propagation in the race, that is to say, eating and drinking and sexual intercourse. Temperance curbs the craving for these things. On the other hand, the same appetite sovereignly shuns that which is the destruction of the animal nature, namely death. Fortitude curbs the fear of death. But as the Hebrew Psalm cxxxix has it, man is *fearfully and wonderfully made*. Here is a wonder in the constitution of humanity, and of animal nature generally; the irrational appetite does not in every respect fear death: in some respects it is only too prone to rush upon death recklessly. We must recall what we have laid down already, that the irrational appetite is two fold. There is the blind craving after the pleasurable; in that, the lowest portion of the irrational appetite, temperance has its seat. There is a higher, though still irrational portion; and this portion, oddly enough—except in Greek, where Plato named it *thumos*—has never had a distinctive name to itself in any language. St. Thomas called it the “irascible part.” We are obliged to call it by such slang names as “pluck,” “go,” for lack of a proper terminology. Perhaps “rage” might be a suitable and decent name for this irrational portion. In the portion called rage (*thumos*) then there dwells the passion of impetuosity. There also dwells in the same portion the counter-passion of fear. Impetuosity urges one to rush on death; fear, to fly from it. Fortitude has for its office to curb and moderate both these passions, but especially the passion of fear. Fortitude is a

mean between rashness (over-impetuosity) and cowardice (over-fear), coming, however, nearer to the former than to the latter. Fortitude thus is a two-sided virtue, moderating two opposite tendencies; while temperance is one-sided, moderating desire alone.

The man of fortitude, whom we will call the "brave man," is not "fearless," in the sense of being quite a stranger to fear. The man who has no fear in him at all is not brave, but foolhardy. The brave man is sensible to fear, but is not carried away by it. His mind subdues the fear, and braves the danger that nature shrinks from. Virtue, it may be observed, has not for its office to extirpate the passions, only to moderate them. The philosophers called Stoics enjoined the extirpation of the passions. Fear was never supposed to seize upon their "wise man," or "sage," nor anger, nor desire, nor any other passion or strong emotion; in all things their sage was calmly and sweetly reasonable, no more. It may readily be imagined that men would sin less if they were devoid of all passion. We must take human nature as we find it, and must make the best of our natural being. Passions are essential constituents of human nature as it comes under our experience. A being wholly devoid of passion would be something other than mortal man. Passions lead incidentally to much evil, but they also do good. To express the fact in a doggerel rhyme,

"Passion nudges,
Reason judges."

An insult, for instance, rouses one to anger. Thereupon it is for my reason to judge how far the punishment of the offender would be a public good, and not (what is forbidden) a mere piece of private revenge. Passion renders some service as a stimulant; some service also as a corroborative, helping us on in

a way that reason already approves; such is the working of great indignation. Somehow a man who seems wholly passionless and unemotional is scarcely a lovable man. He is scarcely human. Like loves like, and humanity loves its kind. Be it admitted then that the breast of the brave man is not wholly inaccessible to the passion of fear.

Fortitude is not an intellectual conviction, as Plato thought: it is a habit resting upon the intellectual conviction that the physical evil of death is not the worst of evils; but, as Aristotle says, "there are things which a man should never allow himself to be forced into doing—he should rather die." So the martyrs judged, when there was question of denying Christ. The highest act of fortitude is martyrdom. "Call a person a martyr," says St. Ambrose; "you need add no further praise." Establish the fact of martyrdom, and we may proceed to canonization without ulterior inquiry.

*"Agnis sepulcrum est Romulea in domo,
Fortis puellae, martyris inclytæ."*

"Agnes's tomb is in the house of Romulus, brave girl, glorious martyr": so the Christian poet Prudentius. I forget the rest of his eulogium, but really no more is needed. "Of all virtuous acts," writes St. Thomas, "martyrdom pre-eminently argues the perfection of charity; because a man proves himself to love a thing the more, the more lovable the thing that he despises for its sake, and the more hateful the thing he chooses to suffer rather than lose it. But of all the goods of the present life man loves life most, and contrariwise most hates death, especially a death attended with pain and bodily torments. And therefore, of human acts, martyrdom is the most perfect of its kind, as being the sign



of the greatest charity, according to the text: *Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends*' (John xv, 13). In the natural order, the analogue of martyrdom is a soldier's death on the battle-field. Fortitude is shown wherever death is braved on right principle in a noble cause; and, in a less degree, wherever anything painful to bear is smilingly encountered.

Before we commend a daring deed, or a feat of endurance, as an act of fortitude, we must have reason to think that it is done on the proper motive of the virtue, *i. e.*, for conscience' sake, and not on an inferior motive. It is not fortitude to venture life in what is manifestly a bad cause. It is not fortitude to stand your ground because mere human respect, or the threat of punishment, keeps you from running away. Mere stolidity and toughness of nerve and physical fibre is not fortitude, but a predisposition thereto. In this way men are predisposed to fortitude by living much in the open air, like those Germans of whom we read in Cæsar that for thirteen years they had not gone under a roof. Knowledge that there is no real danger is not fortitude, nor professional skill bringing the danger for you almost to zero. Lastly, anger emboldens, but bold deeds done under mere impulse of anger are not acts of fortitude. If the angry man is to be accounted brave, we can hardly refuse the praise of fortitude even to the drunkard, for "mighty deeds are done by wine."

One would almost like to add a petition to the Litany, *A timiditate bonorum, libera nos, Domine*: "from the timidity of good people, good Lord, deliver us." The good are frequently at fault in the matter of the two virtues of fortitude and hope. A certain audacity lends itself to wickedness; the world is full

of bold bad men. Timidity restrains from evil, as also does ill-health, the "bridle of Theages," as Plato named it; but when the timorous, or sickly, person has entered on the ways of virtue, his timidity restrains him from going very far in that direction. He is no hero. That is one reason why good people are many, but saints are few. It takes immense courage to start a saint. That great saint and lion-hearted woman, St. Teresa, knowing this truth, declares that fortitude is more necessary than humility, in a beginner. A beginner has little to pride himself on, much to deter him. Many of us remain moral cowards all our lives, dreading pain, dreading trouble, dreading the opinion of men, uneasy in our relations with God, scrupulous, suspicious, narrow-minded, meticulous. A moral coward never gets far in sanctity himself, and keeps others back. "Lord, give me faith and fortitude," was the prayer of a celebrated Oriental priest.

Fortitude is shown in attack, in taking the offensive vigorously, but more in defence and endurance, for the latter is harder, being done more on principle, with less support from the passion of impetuosity; also it is more protracted. So much more difficult is it to endure that it is a rule in war, whenever you can, to exchange the more difficult for the easier, and convert your defence into an attack—which is a good rule in controversy also. The fortitude of a soldier comes out under the hardships of campaigning quite as much as in the wild rush of battle. The difficulty of martyrdom is just this, that the martyr has to stand wholly on the defensive; nay, he does not even defend himself, he endures. His, therefore, is the sublimest fortitude of all. The transition, then, is easy from fortitude to patience, which is usually ranked under fortitude. The object-matter of patience is not death; a man is said to die not patiently, but bravely. The

object-matter of patience is the pain and annoyance of living, not to be saddened and soured under the burden of life. No virtue is more practical, none of more daily use. To whatever destination a man is setting out, you may always advise him to take as part of his outfit a large store of patience. Those who have most to do with their fellow-men have most need of patience; and every man has need of patience with himself. There is *the patience of the poor*, which the Psalmist (Ps. ix, 19) assures us shall never be lost sight of by God; the patience of learner and teacher, of workman and employer (oh, that there were more of it!), and as every one knows, patience is sorely tried by sickness. Bishop Ullathorne, of Birmingham, has written a large book on "Christian Patience," perhaps the most successful of all his works. Patience is dearer to God than great exploits. *Better is the patient man than the strong; and he that governs his temper than the stormer of cities* (Prov. xvi, 32). Impatience is one of the last sins that perfect men thoroughly overcome. He is a good man, indeed, who is patient on his death-bed.

Patience and meekness differ in this, that meekness is a curb upon anger, whereas patience on the whole may be said rather to curb fear taking the shape of fretfulness. A strong man is usually good-natured. He feels himself equal to the daily burdens of life, and does not fret over them. He is not querulous, but he is hot tempered. He is prompt to beat down resistance, and to right his own and other people's wrongs; he does not pule and whine over them. People say he is impatient, he is really passionate and quick to anger—he is lacking in meekness, not in power to bear. There is a spice of cowardliness in all genuine impatience. The impatient man thinks that more is

being put upon him, or fears that more will be put upon him, than he is able to bear. His spirit is overcome by the prospect of evil, which condition of defeat is a special note of fear. "The object of fear," says St. Thomas, "is something in the future, difficult and irresistible." A man is not afraid who thinks that he can bear what is being put upon him. And he is not impatient, either. An impatient man does ill in office—he has not the courage of his position—he lacks that fortitude which, like charity, *beareth all things* (I Cor. xiii); whereas a hot-tempered man, if he knows himself, may prove a capable ruler. What a hot-tempered man, who is also an able man, dislikes is slowness of execution, or bungling, or failure to perceive what is wanted, all which defects in his subordinates thwart his enterprises, and to his imagination look like wilful perversities and slights upon him, the commander. "To his imagination," I say, for it is imagination rather than intellect that makes a man angry. His intellect is aware that these defects for the most part are natural rather than voluntary. But so an impatient man gets into a rage with a pen that will not write, a lock that will not open, which is an irrational rage, similar to that of the lower animals. This so-called impatience, however, is lack of meekness rather than of patience. It is called "impatience" perhaps because there is no handy word to express the contrary of meekness. But in all genuine impatience there is something of the cowardly, for patience ranks under fortitude.

We may call patience a virtue-making virtue. Virtue comes of repetition of acts done with difficulty, weariness, and disappointment at one's own failures. The virtue is slow in coming; and when we think we have it, like other skill it fails us at an emergency. The notion then strikes us that we were not born

to be virtuous, or cannot be virtuous as yet—let the virtue come, if it will, in riper life. Such cowardice is to be checked by the thought that if the virtue be not forthcoming, there will set in instead the contrary vice, which, once it has become as a second nature, will be difficult to dislodge. Surely there should be a dash of heroism in every Christian character, heroism taking the form of patience and perseverance in well-doing. *He that persevereth to the end shall be saved* (Matt. x, 22). In the list of those whose portion is *the second death*, along with *the unbelieving and the abominable and evil liver*s there appear, heading the list, *the cowardly* (Apoc. xxi, 8). There is a saying in England among the common people, "It's dogged as does it." In a recent national crisis there was revived a watchword of the party that ultimately proved victorious in the great Civil War, "We will see this thing through." God may well expect the *children of light* to dare for salvation what the *children of this world* (Luke xvi, 8) dare and bear for temporal ends. To be in heaven is to be with the martyrs, which means the having led a life on earth not wholly unlike martyrdom. The spirit of martyrs, *the spirit of fortitude* (Isai. xi, 2), that gift of the Holy Ghost which is breathed into us in Confirmation, should abide permanently in every Christian heart. Without this readiness to dare to do right and to suffer for doing so, religion comes to be as a pastime, or a conventionality for Sundays.

VII. OF JUSTICE

Of justice Aristotle says that "neither evening star nor morning star is so admirable," Justice is a habit residing in the will, and disposes the just man, in regard of other intelligent and rational beings about him, constantly and regularly to render to each his own. All justice is *in relation to another*. It is not by justice that a man governs himself, but by temperance and fortitude; for to govern oneself means to govern one's passions, and temperance and fortitude concern the passions. These virtuous habits, of course, are gained by acts of the will; and, when possessed, they are put into operation by the will. But not for that are they in the will. A habit is not put where it is unnecessary, and it *is* unnecessary where the power is competent of itself. Of itself the will as an intelligent power is apt to rule the body on intelligent principles. The difficulty is the appetite getting in the way; appetite, a blind power, bent on other than rational gratifications. Appetite then needs to be disciplined by virtue. When this discipline is perfect, there is no longer any obstruction to the will's right management of the body. Analogically, the habit or skill of bowling at cricket is not in the will, but in the muscular mechanism. Every youth has will enough to be a good bowler, but the muscles need training, and the nervous currents directing in a particular way. It would be a sarcastic remark to make of your bowler that he showed much good will, that he meant well, that his intentions were good.

Self-government is secured when fortitude and temperance are secured; then the will governs at home with ease. But foreign relations—that is, relations with other selves—involve many difficulties over and above the rebellion of our own passions; to overcome

these difficulties the will is strengthened by the virtue of justice. True, as we have seen, the virtues aid, and in a manner presuppose one another. Whoever is master of his own passions, is thereby immensely improved in all his dealings with his neighbours, the man who is master of his anger, for instance. A meek man will not strike in anger. A temperate woman will not steal to spend the money in drink. But though striking, stealing and other sins against justice are often committed under the promptings of passion, not all sins against justice are traceable to that source. Most great frauds were perpetrated under the prompting of avarice; now, avarice is not strictly a passion; it resides in the intelligence and imagination. Over and above the virtues that control passion, then, there is room and need for a further virtue, a virtue in the will, for the good conduct of foreign relations. Such is the virtue of justice. An anchorite, a perfect solitary, as was for long years St. Paul the first hermit, would have no need of justice, except in reference to his Creator, in which relation justice passes into religion. But the more you are mixed up with your fellowmen, the more you require to be just, and it is not easy to be just.

Justice renders to every man his own. But what is *his own*? One answer—not a sufficient and complete answer, but an answer that goes a certain way—is, “What the law allows him, and will punish you for if you do not render it to him.” Justice then is obedience to law in all our relations with our fellowmen, and in this sense we call it general, or *legal justice*. A *just* man is a *law-abiding* man; and a *court of justice* is a *law-enforcing* court. The law commands acts of all virtues, so far as is requisite for the general good of the commonwealth. Whoever thus practises legal justice, is a *good citizen*. You can not yet call him a *patriotic citizen*, for a patriot will volunteer to do for his country’s sake

much more than the law exacts of him. Nor can you be sure that he is a good man, for a *good man* will do many acts and abstain from many, the omission or commission of which is not punishable in the courts of the realm. He may, for all you know, be another Shylock, who will have his "pound of flesh" out of every debtor bound to him by contract, regardless of "equity" (which is the intention of the legislator) and mercy (which is the attribute of God). Again, a good man is good within and without, in heart and in act; but your legally just man, so far as his justice is referred to the law of the state, is good in overt act only. *De internis non judicat praetor*, the civil judge is not cognizant of purely inward dispositions.

For legal justice to be any way commensurate with all goodness, it must be referred to the law of God, natural (in the Commandments) and revealed (in Christ). In this way a drunkard is not legally just, because he breaks the Sixth, or whatever Commandment we take to include all temperance; nor a Catholic who neglects Sunday Mass, because he disregards the precept of Christ to *hear the Church* (Matt. xviii, 17). On the other hand, for their fulfilment of the law of God, the parents of the Baptist, Zachary and Elizabeth, are pronounced legally just; *they were both just before God, walking in all the commandments of the Lord without blame* (Luke i, 6). When a sinner is pardoned he is said to be *justified*; that is, after having broken the law and failed in legal justice, he is reinstated as though he had not broken it, in the condition of the just who have observed the law. Legal justice, thus understood, includes the exercise of all the virtues, so far as their acts are commanded by God. It is an ample virtue, or rather the virtue of virtues, meaning an habitual avoidance of whatever displeases God, at least of all that offends Him mortally. It is a

permanent practical horror of mortal sin. That is the primary and essential requisite for saving your soul. He is not in a state of salvation at all, he is on the road to hell, who does not possess in some degree this general virtue of legal justice. To speak in the words of the Psalm (cviii), he is *not written with the just*.

This general virtue, however, can not be that justice which counts for one of the four cardinal virtues; for it is inclusive of the other three. You can not divide in this way—Maryland, America, New York and Connecticut. We must look for justice in some particular form, in which it shall be distinct from other virtues. So to distinguish it, let us return to our definition of justice. Justice we defined to be the habit of constantly and regularly rendering to other intelligent and rational beings about us each his own. The first of “intelligent and rational beings about us” is God; and God claims as “his own” our entire obedience to His law; thus our every sin is a sin against justice in our relation with our Creator; and once more, justice becomes a universal virtue. We will deal with this difficulty when we come to the virtue of religion. For the present, not considering religion, nor the angels, whose rights we can not infringe, we will define justice in relation to those with whom we are visibly associated on earth. Justice then is the habit of rendering to our fellowmen each his own. Thus defined, justice is of two sorts, *distributive* and *corrective*, to follow the Aristotelian division. Distributive justice resides in the rulers of a commonwealth, and involves the awarding of rewards and punishments to the members of the commonwealth according to their several deserts. When

The page killed the boar,
The peer had the gloire,

that was an offense against distributive justice, unless we are to suppose the page to be indistinguishable from his master. We call it "favoritism" when the worthy are passed over, and the less worthy sought out and decorated. Favoritism is a violation of distributive justice. When it comes to the awarding of punishments, distributive justice takes the name of *retributive justice*. And this is a very common meaning of the term "justice." For this the multitudes clamoured, rightly or wrongly, when they filled the precincts of the Palace of Whitehall in the days of Charles I, crying "Justice! Justice!" for the head of Strafford. In this signification an English or Irish gentleman signs himself J. P. (Justice of the Peace).

Still we have not yet reached the innermost core of the virtue of justice. If a deserving British officer is not knighted or made a peer, he can not strictly be said to have been kept out of his own, for peerage or knighthood never have been his. He had a claim that the honour should be made his, and given him, which claim is called by Roman lawyers a *jus ad rem*, a right *to* the thing; but as the honour never became his, he had not in it a *jus in re*, a right of ownership in the thing. His claim remaining unsatisfied, the rulers of the State remain bound to attend to it; but they owe him no restitution, for the simple reason that what a man never has had can not be *restored* to him. We shall see presently that a violation of strict justice always involves *restitution*. Still less can a rogue unchanged complain that he has been wronged because he has not come to his own—a halter. He is little likely to complain of that; and the maxim holds, *volenti non fit injuria*, no wrong is done to a willing man. Distributive justice then, and retributive justice, though it is part of the cardinal virtue, still is not justice in the strictest sense of the term.

To find that sense verified we must fall back upon what Aristotle calls *corrective justice*, and Catholic divines generally *commutative justice*. The variation of terminology is due to a clerical error in a translation of Aristotle used in the thirteenth century. We will keep to the true Aristotelian phrase, *corrective justice*; and that we will subdivide at our own convenience into *commutative* and *restitutive*. In *corrective justice*, and its two species just enumerated, we shall find the genuine idea of justice. The office of *corrective justice* is to regulate and rectify men's dealings with fellow-men, so that every man shall have what is properly *his own*, what is part or appanage of *himself*; shall keep it, or shall have it given back to him, if it has been wrongfully taken away. A man is well-nigh beyond instruction, who tells you that he does not know what *his own* means. However, we may point out to such a man that a thing may be *his own* in two ways: it may be his own *legally*, and it may be his own *by right*; and consequently it may be his own *legally and by right*, or *legally, but not by right*, or *by right, but not legally*. A thing is a man's own *legally* when the courts of his country will support his possession of it. A thing is a man's own *by right* when the civil courts ought to support him in possession of it,* so far as the matter lies within their com-

*"A thing is a man's own by right, when the civil courts ought to support him in possession of it." It may further be demanded why they ought. I reply, first, because the thing is necessary to the man's existence and individual well-being. Secondly, because it is needed to enable him to discharge his social function in the commonwealth. Thirdly, because he is established in that possession by the will of God. Something in the same way, a garden flower requires this or that to grow up as a flower at all. Secondly, it requires this or that in order, in its proper place, to contribute to the general beauty of the garden. Thirdly, the gardener wills it to have these particular advantages for its purposes above named. It must be added that many rights are vague and indeterminate by nature, and must be determined and particularly fixed by the civil law of the State. For further study of this difficult subject of rights the reader is referred to my *Political and Moral Essays; Moral Philosophy*.

petence. The distinction between what the civil courts *will* and what they *ought* to support is founded on the assumption that not all law, nor all administration of law, is good; evil administration is conceivable, and evil ought not to be; an assumption which any and every party readily enough makes, when itself has the misfortune to lose the upper hand in the conduct of public affairs. What is a man's own makes a sort of circle about himself. When men live "cheek by jowl," as they must in human society, these circles intersect; and it is important that they should intersect peaceably, on a good mutual understanding, without violent collision and fracture. This is secured by one neighbour resigning part of what was his own in favour of another, on condition of the neighbour so benefited making a reciprocal resignation. Hence a system of voluntary exchange, formulated by the Roman lawyers as "I give on condition that you give," "I do on condition that you do," *do ut des, facio ut facias*. Over these voluntary exchanges *commutative justice* presides. Commutative justice is justice in buying and selling, justice in all relations of debtor and creditor, justice between workman and employer, justice in the fulfilment of every valid contract. When your neighbour makes over to you something of what was his own, something of his material substance or something of his personal labour, he does so on the express understanding that you make over something of your own in return. The carrying out of this is an act of the virtue of justice, strictly so-called, namely, *commutative justice*. Your neighbour, however, may, and frequently will, make over to you something of his own without covenanting for a return on your part; he is then said to *give*. Giving does not belong to justice but to some further virtue, as liberality or charity. Unhappily, men will frequently take what is not given them. This is

theft or robbery, according as it be done by stealth or with open violence. Theft and robbery are punished in the criminal courts of the land. To the action of those courts we have referred under the head of *retributive justice*. Such justice is dispensed on public, not on private grounds; for the benefit of the commonwealth, not for the satisfaction of the individual sufferer. It is no satisfaction to me that the man who has stolen my cheese has got a fortnight in prison. I am not compensated by his imprisonment. I want my cheese back. In taking away mine without my consent the thief, all unconsciously, made a contract with me, what divines call "an involuntary contract." Quite involuntarily on my part, he became possessed of the cheese; that was the first half of the contract. The second half consists in his making restitution to me of the cheese, or of its equivalent, voluntarily, if he will (and such *restitution* is a constituent element in his repentance); but otherwise, if he will not, he must be forced involuntarily to restore. Presiding over these "involuntary contracts" is *restitutive justice*, also part of justice strictly so called. Whenever you sin against *strict justice* you are bound to *restitution*.

VIII. JUSTICE AND CHARITY

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance to the animal body of the bony framework called the skeleton. Nevertheless a mere skeleton neither lives nor moves. To scientific thought our usual emblem of Death as a walking skeleton is a ludicrous absurdity. However shall bones double one upon the other otherwise than by the contraction of muscles? Justice is the solid skeleton of human society. No society can work without justice. But again, no society can work on principles of justice alone. The muscle, the covering flesh of human society, is charity. But charity, it will be said, is a theological virtue, supernatural and infused; and we are not treating of such virtues at present, only of natural virtues acquired by frequent acts, exercise and practice. Still we can not wholly ignore the supernatural. The supernatural is given us to be the guide of the natural, grace the motive power of nature; nature should not be destroyed, but should be subordinate to and commanded by grace, and execute the behests of the spirit. We are not ignoring the supernatural; nevertheless, for the present, we prescind from it. And that we do in this instance the more readily because there is such a thing as natural charity, friendship and friendliness between man and man, mutual good feeling and good will, sympathy, benevolence and kindness. Aristotle, the panegyrist of justice, was so alive to this fact that he wrote: "Where justice is, there is further need of friendship; but where friendship is, there is no need of justice." A man needs no justice in his dealing with himself; he is tender enough of himself and his own. But a friend is a sort of second self. "Yes," you will say, "but I like my first self best." Not in all things, if you are a

true friend. A man will give his very life for his friend. By "charity" I mean here, not exactly friendship, for friends must be few, but friendliness, as it were *friend-like-ness*, some approach to friendship, extending in a greater or less degree to all the men you have dealings with. Friendship and friendliness, or natural charity, grow from a common stock, love. Man is happily prone, under favourable conditions, to make man his fellow and love him. An English philosopher has said that the natural instinct of man meeting man for the first time would be to regard him as a rival, and either kill him or make a slave of him. So it might be, if man grew up to man's estate in perfect solitude, like pearls in separate shells, as the said philosopher (Hobbes) was apt tacitly to assume and argue accordingly. But man is born of man and woman, and grows up among brothers and sisters and playmates; he springs of love, and is reared in love—not without admixture of hatred and jealousy, for there is no pure good in this world. The consequence of friendliness is that men are apt at times to give, and not always to bargain; sometimes to act on charity, and not insist upon justice. A friend sends a present of a haunch of venison for your wedding day. What an oddity you would take him for if he served you with a butcher's bill next week! But, it may be contended, he expects similar presents himself from you in season. Not if he is rich, and you are poor. But at least he expects gratitude, that is, some sort of return. But not a specific return. Justice is always specific, keeps books, sends in accounts and bills, this for that, the two being taken as equivalents in money value. Gratitude goes not into bills. Nevertheless, because friendship is returned, and in a manner repaid by friendship, St. Thomas puts down liberality, and gratitude, and "the friendliness that is called affability," as so many "potential" parts of justice; that is, they

rank under justice, not strictly so called, but in a loose and wide sense of the term, as having certain affinities with justice. My own! my own! one thing that is my own is my heart to give away. Life would not be worth living without love. As the heart is given, other gifts will follow. Every gift is an abatement of strict justice. Such is charity.

Three points our Saviour urges in the Gospel with especial insistence—faith in His person and mission, watchfulness for His second coming, and charity, or love, for one another. And this charity He would have to take the shape of abatement of the rights which in strict justice we have against one another. Shylock, clamouring for his pound of flesh, is an eminently anti-Christian character. Christ has put this lesson into the Lord's Prayer: *Forgive us our trespasses*, is, more literally, *Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors* (Matt. vi. 12). *And if any man will go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also* (Matt. v, 40). In St. Matthew (xviii, 21-35) is the parable of the servant who owed his lord ten thousand talents, or something like eight million dollars, an impossible sum to pay, was released of the debt, and therefrom proceeded to throttle his fellow-servant for a twenty-dollar debt; for which insistence on his right—for the twenty dollars were really due in strict justice—his lord handed the implacable creditor over to the torturers till he paid the last farthing of his own huge liabilities, which he never could meet for all eternity. Certainly it is well at times to insist upon one's just rights, but it is also well at times—oftener, perhaps, than we think—to abate them. The parable is the condemnation of the hard man, who will never upon any consideration abate one jot or tittle of what his neighbour in strict justice owes him. And

this applies not only to money, but to honour, precedence, deference, and all things that men prize.

A hard bargain may be not merely uncharitable, but positively unjust. Such a bargain is that between employer and employee, when the former engrosses all the working strength of the latter, and pays him in return not enough to live upon "in frugal comfort," as Leo XIII teaches in his Encyclical of May, 1891, on the "Condition of Labour." On the other hand, the employer has a right to all that labour, care, attention, diligence and accuracy of work for which he pays a just wage—a debt of justice often ignored by workmen. Justice suffers, and has its edges knocked off, where it is not covered by charity. In charity the employer will do more than he is legally bound for his employees. In charity they will on occasion do more than they are legally bound for him. When this notion of charity is spurned, and capital and labour behave as two independent, unfriendly powers, each jealous of the other, each striving to wring the utmost concession that the law will allow from the other, there must be acts of injustice done on both sides. The Lord's Prayer has much to tell us if we will think it over in remedy of the ills of life.

It should be understood that charity is not always optional, not always mere matter of counsel, but, like justice, charity also sometimes imposes an obligation under sin. You are bound under sin to help your neighbour when he is in distress and is unable to help himself out of it, while you being close at hand can help him without yourself falling into the like distress. Thus you would be bound under sin to take into your house, or otherwise provide for a beggar whom you found frozen at your door. You are bound to rescue a drowning man, if you can get him out without notable risk to your own life. Charity binds us in our neighbour's need in

the absence of any special contract to stand by him. Where there is such special contract the obligation is no longer of charity, but of justice. The soldier has contracted, and is bound in justice, to venture his life at the word of command in battle. The parish priest is bound in justice, even at the risk of infection, to administer the last Sacraments to a dying sinner in his parish; whereas a stranger priest passing that way would at most be bound only in charity. I am fain to add, he is not much of a priest if he stands on his points in such an occasion. You are also bound in justice to prevent your neighbour taking harm directly in consequence of your action. Thus, if you have even accidentally pushed a child into deep water, you are bound to get him out if you can; much more if you have done it on purpose. The difference between an obligation in justice and an obligation in charity is of great practical import in casuistry, inasmuch as a neglected obligation in justice involves reparation and restitution, where the matter admits of restitution, but no restitution is due for neglect of what you were bound to do in charity. Therefore, a sin against justice is called a *peccatum caudatum*, a sin with a tail, the tail being the burden of having to restore. As we have seen, restitution is the second half of the involuntary contract. How many sins, tail and all, how many deeds of wrong with the wrong never made good, must come under the final cognizance of the Sovereign Judge!

It is no rare experience to encounter pious people who are strangely neglectful of their obligations in justice—leave their tradesmen's bills unpaid, with the result that other customers, who do pay, pay for them also in the increased price—fail to discharge duties which they are salaried to perform—have young children under their wardship and custody, and take no pains even to know how they are going on. These omissions proceed from no deliberate

contempt of justice; they may involve no grievous sin; thoughtlessness may be pleaded in palliation of them, but thoughtlessness is a fool's excuse. A healthy conscience is extremely sensitive to claims of neighbours, claims in decency and courtesy, claims in charity, and above all, claims in justice. Of one of the greatest of the saints, Scripture is satisfied with informing us truly that he was a *just man*. Justice is the backbone of charity. If you are in superiority, and find it not in your nature to be a very loving father to those under you, be at least just to them. The saying is well known in England of the schoolboy who in boyish language described his headmaster as "a beast," then added on reflection, "but he is a just beast." The "just beast" became Archbishop of Canterbury, and in that high station well maintained his character for justice.

As a man has a right to life, limb, and property, the violation of which right is a sin against justice and calls for restitution, so equally has he right to honour and respect and deferential treatment according to his rank from those about him, be they his equals or even his superiors. To browbeat a man, to address him in abusive or scornful language, and generally to insult him, is not merely uncharitable, it is downright injustice, and calls for restitution in the shape of an apology, howbeit the injured person, following our Lord's counsel, will often do well to waive his claim and forgive freely. Every individual man, likewise every corporate body, has a right also to character and reputation. *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour* is a commandment often forgotten when corporate bodies or societies come under discussion. Yet the members of such societies are more jealous of the reputation of the body than of their own individual good name. A man who does evil in public flings away his reputation; he has no character

left to lose. A man who has done evil to his neighbour in secret, and is in a way to do more, also forfeits his reputation to the extent of such denunciation as is necessary for the prevention of his further injury or harming others. Under this exception a man has a right to a good character so long as he behaves well in public. To take such character away is a sin against justice. If the defamation be false, it is called "calumny"; where it is true it is "detraction." Both calumny and detraction call for restitution of good name; but where the story is true, obviously such restitution is hardly possible. You can not mend broken glass. You must not lie to undo a wrong. Still less must you do a wrong by spreading lying reports detrimental to the character of another; those you are bound to contradict if you yourself are the author of them, in justice; if you are not the author, in charity. Altogether it may save much subsequent distress of mind to be always wary of one's words in speaking of the absent, particularly if they be persons whom you dislike.

Concerning vengeance, or revenge, I find that natural temperaments differ curiously on this point. Some are more prone to revenge an insult, others rather cry for vengeance on cruelty. The Christian is taught not to seek vengeance for a private wrong, as such. We may seek restitution, or compensation, but that is not vengeance. It is not vengeance, it is only the exaction of the fulfilment of (an involuntary) contract, if I compel him who has robbed me of property to the extent of five hundred dollars to pay me in a note to that amount. It would be vengeance were I to horsewhip him for it. That the law will not allow. In civilized countries the law has gradually by slow degrees assumed to itself the function of avenging wrong done by one private citizen to another. The law punishes wrong-doers on public grounds, by way

of public example, as a deterrent. In that light I do well to bring the man who has injured me to public justice, not exactly because he has injured *me* (I forgive him that), but *reipublicae causa*, that he may not go on injuring others. This is the sense of the text, *Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord* (Deut. xxii, 35; Rom. xii, 19). The retribution meted out by the criminal law of the State is the vengeance of the Lord, whose minister the civil magistrate is. *He beareth not the sword in vain, for he is God's minister, doing justice unto anger upon him that doth ill* (Rom. xiii, 4).

An old writer has said: "It is praiseworthy to be patient under one's own wrongs, but the height of impiety to dissemble injuries done to God." We feel a righteous indignation at injuries done to the Church, but commonly we must forego vengeance; for in these days no public authority is concerned to avenge such wrongs, and we must not take the business into private hands. Even under injuries done to Himself Our Lord teaches us patience. His Apostles were to be *as sheep in the midst of wolves* (Matt. x, 16). When James and John would have called down fire from heaven upon the Samaritan town that shut its gates to their Master, He restrained them with the words, *Ye know not of what spirit ye are* (Luke ix, 55).

IX. THE VIRTUE OF RELIGION

The one Being with whom we have relation for everything that we are, upon whom all that is in us is dependent, who has rights over us without limitation, and to whom we are bound in justice by the most stringent and constraining ties, is God our Creator. We owe Him in justice, and He claims of us in strict right, the perfect observance of His law; so that, as we have seen already, every sin against the law of God is a violation of justice in the divine regard, and perfect justice toward God would imply the full observance of that law, and the exercise of all the virtues in so far as enjoined by that law. One thing, however, God particularly insists on: that is the recognition of this our absolute dependence upon Him, and the signification of our sense of dependence by a sensible and external sign. This recognition and sensible signification of the same is called *worship*. Justice toward God is all summed up and specialized in the payment of religious worship. Worship, indeed, is not the observance of the whole law of God; but it is at least a recognition that we ought to observe it. Recognition of the debt is the first step to payment. The worship of God then is the matter of a special virtue of justice toward God, which is called the virtue of religion.

The word *religion* comes from the Latin. The Romans themselves disputed about the derivation of the word. Some derived it from *religens*, a word opposed to *negligens*, both coming from *lego* (I pick up). The *negligent* man is he who picks up nothing; while the *religious* man is he who picks up again and again, a scrupulous, conscientious, careful man, answering to the prophet's prescription, *to walk solicitously with thy God* (Mich. vi, 8).

Others preferred the derivation from *religare* (to bind again), considering that religion binds men to God. Whichever explanation be right, both appeal to right principles. Religion is a recognition of the tie that binds us to God. Religion does make us careful to walk reverently and do obeisance in the presence of Majesty Divine. The irreligious man revels in a mistaken freedom; he is frequently a loose and reckless liver. So much for etymology.

We have put the virtue of religion under justice. Some might wish it counted a theological virtue, as having relation immediately with God. Faith, no doubt, is exercised in the Christian exercise of religion, and hope, too; still religion can not be classified with faith, hope and charity, for this, among other reasons, that the theological virtues belong to the supernatural order, whereas religion is a virtue of the natural order. That is to say, faith (and say the like of hope and charity) refers us to God as known in Christ, and is exercised by us in our capacity of Christians, borne up by the grace of Christ; whereas religion refers us to God in Himself as God, and to God as our Creator and Lord, which He is even apart from the Incarnation, and is a virtue which, man as man, in the order of reason and natural propriety, is bound to exercise. Religion then is not a theological virtue, because it is a virtue proper to human nature as such. It may be added that God is known immediately by us on earth only through revelation; in the order of nature, away from revelation, He is known mediately by process of reasoning. In the light of that mediate knowledge religion, as a natural virtue, worships Him.

Worship, to be acceptable, must come from the heart. It should be the outpouring of a heart docile and submissive to God. Our Lord condemned the worship of the Pharisees and of the Jewish priests, with their multitudinous observances, because their

hearts were far from Him whom they honored with their lips. The worship of an insincere heart is called formalism. Formalism, to be sure, is an evil thing, but that does not make forms, rites and ceremonies in religious worship, evil things, any more than food becomes evil by the abuse of food turning to indigestion. Nor is it to any purpose to allege that rites and ceremonies are of no use to God. Of course they are of no use to God. The whole of creation put together is not of the slightest use to God. When we have done all that we are commanded to do, God bids us say we are *unprofitable servants* (Luke xvii, 10). God has nothing to gain by us. His aims are fixed wholly beyond the category of the useful. He looks for honour, quite a different thing from utility. He need not have created either men or angels; but having created them, He looks to their paying Him honour.

But why not, to use a phrase once famous, "worship mostly of the silent sort"? Because we are men, and silence on matters that we are interested in is against our nature. What lover of country lanes in summer is silent in praise of flowers? Our work will not be mostly of the silent sort if we really care about religion. Besides, as philosophers are now discovering, religion originally springs out of the social side of human nature. Once found, God may be prayed to in solitude, but He is first found in company. In the order of nature you have first the congregation, then the priest and the altar, expressive of the common desire to adore some power above the community, to whom the community owes allegiance, the worship of whom paid by all in common is the cement of that society. In the primitive commonwealth there was one common worship. And to this day unity of worship is the ideal for a commonwealth, for lack of attainment of which ideal we citizens of modern states have many lamentable disputes about

education. Religion, then, is not a growth of solitude, but of society. It is a function of social man. But a social function can not be carried on in silence. I have never attended a meeting of the Society of Friends; but the members of that society, I understand, are few and select. Their procedure can not make a rule for the many. A man may sing by himself, and he may pray by himself, and should often do so. Nevertheless, nearly all great musical compositions involve the harmony of many voices and instruments; and nearly all religions have their public ritual, even though it be of the simplest, as in the case of Mohamedanism and Puritanism. with regard to which it may be debated whether their religion or their unreligiousness it is that has made their ritual so bald and plain. Yet even the Mohamedan is publicly called to frequent prayer; while the Puritan, though his chief interest lay in the sermon, spent hours in congregational singing of psalms.

In the Psalms, sun, moon, stars and light, and all the irrational creation, are invited to praise God. And so they do, simply by being what they are, manifestations of God's power, wisdom and goodness. But the starry heavens are all unconscious of the praise that they render to God. Man is their mouthpiece. In his mind their unconscious witness to their Creator passes into consciousness. Man is the high priest of the material creation. He raises inferior things to the religious order. The lower animals he sacrifices to God, or used to do, while God was pleased to accept such victims. The great sacrifice of the New Law is offered from the fruits of the earth, the fruit of the vineyard and the cornfield. Man lays gold and silver plate and jewels, when he has them, upon the altar. He enshrines the altar in an edifice so majestic and glorious, that even when defaced and profaned a king's palace looks mean and vulgar by the side of it. These are the outward splendours of religion:

thus matter worships God. But the most perfect work among visible and material things is not any handiwork of man; it is a work of God's own formation, the body of man. "With my body I thee worship," says bridegroom to bride in the English marriage service. "With my body I thee worship," in the higher and strictly religious sense of the word *worship*, every man should say to his Creator. Bowings, genuflections, processions, choral singing, "making a cheerful noise with psalms"—all things that infidels rail at—are part of the *reasonable service* (Rom. xii, 1) that man pays with his body to God. I need not say how much this service is enhanced, when the body is what the body of a Christian ever should be, *holy, well-pleasing to God, the living temple of the Holy Ghost, a member of Christ* (Rom. *ib.*; I Cor. vi, 15, 19). The same men who object to bodily adoration and material adjuncts to religion also make light of Sacraments.

The method of this bodily homage should never be left to individual caprice. No man has any business to be his own master of ceremonies. "Honour the Deity after the manner of your ancestors," was a maxim with the Greeks. It is a sound rule, wherever it does not involve idolatrous rites. Where God has not positively signified the rites and ceremonies, whereby He wishes to be worshiped, as He once did through Moses, and does now through the Catholic Church, the approved custom of the country supplies a rule from which the individual worshiper should not notably deviate. In dealing with religion we must never forget that there is such a thing as religious mania, and that religious emotion, uncontrolled, especially when it seizes upon a multitude, is apt to issue in practices which are not of the spirit of God, practices in flagrant violation of morality and His commandments. A well-ordered public ritual checks these excesses.

Religion being a virtue, and virtue being a habit, and a habit being formed by repetition of acts, and that formation going on most readily when nature is most plastic, as it is in childhood and youth, it should be a main aim of the educator to form his charge to the virtue of religion. To that end they must pray regularly in private, and often take part—not merely be lookers on, but take part in—the public prayers and ceremonies of Holy Church. And here let us get rid of a delusion which our parliamentary orators on the education question seem often to labour under, the idea that religion is a “lesson,” and may be classified as such with geography; that it is forsooth one of the subjects of a timetable. It is nothing of the kind. I grant you religious doctrine is a lesson; but religious doctrine is not religion, albeit religion can not stand without doctrine. Men thoroughly irreligious have still been doctors in theology, masters of religious doctrine. Many boys love their religion, and yet find the lesson in religious doctrine tedious. Religion is a discipline of the whole man, not of the intellect only; it converts the whole being to the worship of God. Religion is instilled by Sacraments, by Confession and Communion, by Mass, Rosary and Benediction, by holy images and the company of religious people, not by Catechism alone. Place a boy in surroundings where these things are not; you will not save his religion by giving him Catechism to learn and the Bible to read for two hours a day. So much for the acquirement of the virtue of religion, the first point in the cycle of true education, indeed the one thing necessary to be educated in at all.

Debts unpaid, and consequently due in justice to tradesmen and others, trouble the conscience of a right-minded man. Some even are found who will concern themselves to pay the debts of their predecessors, whose fortunes they have inherited. Thus good

Queen Mary impoverished herself in paying the debts of Henry VIII and Edward VI. Religious duties neglected are debts unpaid to God. We are bound in justice to worship God at proper intervals. The Church's precept of Sunday Mass is no mere arbitrary imposition. It determines for us a precept of natural law. It fixes a limit beyond which we must not go without doing an act of religion. When Mass is out of our reach, the obligation still rests upon us at certain proper times to pray. We must pray with sufficient frequency to be enabled to resist temptation, and temptation for many of us is both frequent and strong. That is how it comes to be unsafe to omit to pray morning and evening. Hence the tradition of morning and evening prayers.

Man is differentiated from the lower animals by sense of religion and belief in God. Our dumb servants and pets have not the least inkling of a God. They enter in some sort into our sorrows, never into our prayers. One has but to observe their demeanor in church or at prayer time to see how utterly destitute they are of religious awe and reverence. You train them to keep quiet for the time, but so you could if you wanted the time for reading and looking over accounts. They are quiet simply out of complaisance to their human master. He stands to them in place of God. It is said that animals see ghosts; even if they did, that would not argue any apprehension of the divine. Consequently, when a man abandons all religion, he divests himself of a badge of humanity, and steps down into the order of brutes. A high and spiritual religion marks a high civilization. The decay of religion means the degradation of humanity. Of this fact the enemies of religion are continually furnishing evidence by the brutality of their language, and the brutality of their behavior. Homer said well of old, "All men need gods" (*Odyssey* III, 48). And David has said much better, *My soul hath thirsted after the strong living God* (Ps. x, 41).

X. TRUTHFULNESS, GRATITUDE, OBEDIENCE

“Because man is a social animal, one man naturally owes another that without which human society could not go on. But men could not live with one another, if they did not believe one another as declaring the truth to one another. And, therefore, the virtue of truthfulness in some way hinges upon the notion of a thing *due*” (St. Thomas). Thus truthfulness comes to be classified under justice. Not that it is a part of justice strictly so-called. Ordinarily, the knowledge in my mind is not the property of my neighbour, it is not his by right; I am not legally bound to make it over to him; and if, when he asks for it, I deal out to him something else, something contrary even to that knowledge, I do not thereby do him, strictly, an injury and wrong, nor do I owe him afterwards any restitution. Thus if a person asks me my opinion on the Tariff Question, and I tell him that I am a Free Trader, whereas really I am a partisan of Tariff Reform, I tell an untruth, I lie, I commit a sin, but I have not exactly wronged my inquirer. I am not bound to write to him next day and avow my Protectionist sympathies, by way of restitution. A simple lie is not a sin against strict justice. Nay, a simple lie, whatever Protestants may think to the contrary, is never a mortal sin; you will not go to hell for that; but unless you repent and do penance, you will go to purgatory, for it. This is quite enough deterrent to a Catholic, conjoined with the fact of the sinfulness of the lie, for venial sin after all is sin; and as Ecclesiasticus, xv, says: *God hath not given permission to every man to sin*. By a “simple lie,” I mean, first, a lie which is not against religion and the honour of God, as is the lie when

a Catholic denies his being a Catholic, which is a mortal sin; secondly, a lie which does no hurt to our neighbour in point of life, limb, property, or reputation. A lie which does serious hurt to a neighbour in any of those respects is a mortal sin against justice, and entails restitution. Somebody is said once to have walked into a shop where they sold sausages and laid six dead cats on the counter, with the words, "There are six of them; I'll bring you the remaining half-dozen to-morrow." This when the shop was full of customers. No doubt it was a joke, and no customer took it seriously. But seriously to imply by word or gesture, and make it believed, that a respectable poor butcher makes his sausages out of cats, would be more than a simple lie; it would be a lie edged with a barb of injustice, for which, as for any other strict injustice, restitution would be due.

However, we have not here to do with calumny, but simply with the habit of speaking or not speaking the truth, and we will confine our treatment of it, as the early moralists confined theirs, to the matter of speaking of one's self, one's own personal advantages and exploits. A child tells you of itself, and there are grown up people who will tell you of themselves, their doings, and their difficulties, with all the simplicity and effusiveness of a child. Their candour is charming, as being utterly removed from vanity. There is also an offensive and importunate way of forcing your past adventures, or present views, upon your neighbour's notice. A really vain person does not usually speak openly at length, but drops little sagacious, even self-depreciatory hints, all calculated to heighten your opinion of the speaker, or force from you a compliment. Then there are those who are not vain, and seek not admiration for its own sake, but they are gainful and ambitious persons, greedy of emolument and advancement, and to this end they will lie down-

right, cunningly, exaggerating their own value, and depreciating their neighbour's, with or without cause; detraction or calumny, neither comes amiss to them. This sort of people is odious before God and man. I hardly know any worse symptom of character than the habit of systematic lying for the furtherance of one's own ends. Henry VIII was a portentous liar and a typical bad man. A symptom is not necessarily in itself the worst element of the disease; the evil lies in what it points to. There are worse sins than lying; but steady, reckless lying for the purpose of getting on in life is an index to much deep-seated moral evil.

This pestilential type of liar must not be confounded with him whose statements are inexact through constitutional inaccuracy of mind; or, it may be, from exuberance of imagination and love of fun. The liar in jest, once his character is established, can not, I think, be called a liar at all; for when the mood is on him, and the matter is trivial enough to permit it, no one takes his exaggerations or comical stories seriously. He can not be said to affirm anything; consequently he does not lie. He only suggests matter of inquiry, should any one think it worth his while to follow the subject up. One sole stipulation must be made with him, that his jests be never malicious.

Lying is a mark of pride. Humility, as we shall see, is taking one's proper place in the eyes of God; pride is assuming a rank that one has no right to, and consequently a false rank. *I will ascend above the height of the clouds; I will be like the Most High* (Isaias xiv, 14). Such was the aspiration of the first proud creature, Lucifer. There was falsehood in his claim; such was not his place, yet he would have it that it was. He began with a lie; upon a lying pretext he rebelled; therefore, our Saviour calls him *a liar and the father of lies* (John viii, 44). The proud man is pretentious and unreal

in his makeup. What he is by nature and by the grace of God is not enough for him. He dotes upon an imaginary self. For that product of his imagination he claims place and position in the esteem of man, place and position beyond his proper due. His whole policy is based upon a fiction. Fiction and falsehood he loves; they are essential to the character that he plays. He dare not be himself, and let other people take him for no more than he is really worth. Pride is always founded upon a wrong view of self and of the situation. As we are often told, humility is truth.

I can conceive this last proposition being denied. "No," it will be said, "both humility and pride are founded on untruth; pride an untruth in the way of self-exaltation; humility an untruth in the way of self-depreciation. The humble man does not acknowledge his own merits. What shocking things the saints have said in the way of self-depreciation, but they are the worst of sinners, that they deserve to lie at the feet of Judas in hell," etc. If I plead on behalf of the saints that they at least believed what they said, and therefore told no lie, I shall be met—and I think justly met—with the rejoinder, that the proud man also believes in his own estimate of himself. I admit that he does. That is just the misery of his position. The arch liar lies to himself, and brings himself to believe himself. That is what Plato calls "the lie in the soul," the worst of all lies. Satan, I presume, thus lies even to himself. But though he believe in himself, not for that is his lying pride excusable. There is such a thing as culpable self-deception. As for what seems to us the exaggerated language of the saints, that is a matter admitting of much discussion. To discuss it at length would carry us from our subject. The key to the solution is this, that the saints see themselves, not in com-

parison with their fellowmen, but as they stand confronted with the ineffable holiness of God. Before that standard they are confounded for their very least defects; and having an eye (like the publican in the Gospel) on their own misdoings and not (like the Pharisee) on the misdoings of their neighbours, they humble and abase themselves below all other men.

Another virtue, ranked under justice, and also in close connection with humility, is gratitude. I should advise anyone who was looking for an easy way up the mountain of holiness to try the path of gratitude, of perennial exuberant thankfulness to God, and to men as vehicles of the bounties of God. Every master loves a contented and grateful servant; so does the Best of Masters. One hearty *Deo gratias* caroled in the sunny air of enjoyment, or better still, heaved out of the depths of tribulation, sends Satan away in disgust, for he is an eternal malcontent, and the Alleluia, the song of praise to God, is no music in his ear. The grateful man has the humility to own himself not sufficient for himself, but needing the assistance of others; and when he gets it, he does not take it as payment of his dues, or as anything that he had a right to, but as altogether beyond his claims and deserts.

Obedience, if we take it to mean the fulfilment of a contract *do ut facias*, "I give you on condition of your doing for me," may come under justice strictly so called. If John has contracted with Andrew to do a piece of work under Andrew's direction for a money payment, he is bound in justice to do the work, as Andrew is similarly bound to pay him the money. Working under contract, however, is not the proper type of obedience. Obedience supposes superior and inferior, the latter fulfilling the former's command because this superior is the higher in the hierarchical order, and is in *status* the better man of the two. This idea of obedience is

very repugnant to modern minds. Modern men very generally will not hear of *status*, only of contract. But let us turn to the Commandments. Let us hear the Church. The Church delivers to us the Fourth Commandment, which is the commandment of obedience, *honour thy father and thy mother*. The relation of parent and child is not one of contract, but of *status*. And it is the most fundamental of all human relations. Civil society is built up out of families. Consequently the disintegration of the family is the disruption of the State. Anarchists and socialists know that well, and loathe the one as they repudiate the other. Parents, unskilful how to command, and children, scorning to obey, these are filling the world with socialists. A servant, or a workman, should be next thing to a son to his master or employer, and pay not merely the work and service contracted for under stipulation of wage, but likewise the "honour" that the Commandment speaks of, the deference and respect due from inferior to superior. One is laughed at for saying such a thing nowadays. That civil society is incurring the most serious peril from the decay of the old-fashioned virtues of reverence, obedience, purity, religion, no thoughtful man will deny. *Honour thy father and thy mother that thou mayest be long-lived in the land* (Exod. xx, 12). Conversely, a society in which authority is flouted, and obedience is taken for a badge of dishonour, may well be shortlived. One good thing provided by the State, serves as some check on this evil. The State keeps up an army and a navy; and in army and navy that obedience to command and that deference to superiors, which have not been learned in the family, nor probably at school either, as schools go, are learned at last in the ranks or on shipboard. When army and navy become mutinous, the hour for the State's overthrow has struck.

Obedience keeps a man in his hierarchical order in the society to which he belongs, domestic, civil or religious. True obedience is constitutional obedience. Nothing so unconstitutional as to disobey lawful authority commanding within its constitutional province. Slavery is unconstitutional, happily, in modern times. Tyranny is unconstitutional. Constitutional obedience is an honour to the man who pays it, no less than constitutional authority in competent hands is an honour to him who wields it. It is an honour, because it becomes him well and sits well on him as a proper fitting garment. It marks him for the right man in the right place. In the social hierarchy, duly constituted under God, all right places are honorable places. The whole is honorable, so are the parts.

Obedience is for the young and for the poor, two classes of souls who are cherished with singular affection by the Most High. But even the wealthy full-grown man has to obey. He must obey the State, and he must obey the Church. The State, making laws on behalf of property and public decency, commands his ready homage, except perhaps for the burden of taxation. But the Church tries the obedience of the rich. Her fasts and abstinences get in the way of their elegant dinners. Her marriage laws do not suit their family arrangements. A rich man is more apt than a poor man to cavil at the authoritative pronouncements of the Holy See, partly because he is more highly educated and has leisure for speculation; partly because his judgment, fed with flattery—for everybody listens and many applaud when the rich man speaks—proudly goes its own way, impatient of control. The most divine of obediences is obedience to God's Church.

At the Last Day, as a holy man has said, mankind will be divided on a simple principle. The obedient men will be ranged on one side of the Judge, the disobedient on the other. Like will be

assorted with like; some with the arch-rebel, whose banner they have followed and whose motto they have repeated, *I will not serve* (Jerem. ii, 20); others shall be gathered to eternal rest in His bosom, who was *obedient even unto the death of the cross* (Phil. ii, 8).

XI. MAGNANIMITY AND HUMILITY

St. Thomas makes magnanimity and humility too distinct virtues; the former he ranks under fortitude, the latter under temperance. These divisions of virtues are not wholly arbitrary: one division is more in accordance with the nature of things than another. Still there is some room left for difference here as elsewhere in a matter of classification. Much depends on the point of view from which the matter is studied. Now the aim of these addresses is practise rather than theory. In the conduct of those who are aiming at the practice of the virtue, magnanimity readily passes into pride, while the man who would be humble may become a sneak, a mean-spirited creature, from taking no account of magnanimity. We shall be more easily at once magnanimous and humble if we make of magnanimity and humility one two-sided virtue, a mean between two excesses, as fortitude itself is a two-sided virtue, checking two passions which go in two opposite ways, checking the passion of fear that it pass not into cowardice, checking again the passion of impetuosity lest it transgress into foolhardiness. The two-sided virtue of humble magnanimity and magnanimous humility may be called by the name of either of the constituents, as there is no one common name to include both. This arrangement will be found helpful in practise, and I flatter myself it is not so very deficient in point of theory.

Magnanimity, in common parlance, is taken to be a certain generosity in ignoring petty annoyances (which is rather longanimity), as also in forgetting and forgiving, not taking advantage of your enemy when you have him in your power. But the conception of magnanimity originally laid down by Aristotle, and after-

wards adopted, or perhaps we should rather say *adapted*, by St. Thomas, embraces a much wider field. The matter of magnanimity is honor, which is also the matter of humility. The magnanimous man is defined to be "one who deems himself worthy of great honor, and is so worthy indeed," being a thoroughly good man, exalted in virtue, and therefore deserving also to be exalted in honor, which is the meed of virtue. Such a man accepts high honors as his due, makes little account of small compliments, and, conscious of his own real inner worth, is unmoved by affronts and ignominies put upon him by persons who do not understand him and are incapable of measuring his greatness. The mark of the magnanimous man is serenity. A certain portly habit of body, if nature has so endowed him, becomes him well. Aristotle says of him, apparently having some particular person in mind, that "his gait is slow, his voice deep, his utterance grave and leisurely." Those are separable accidents, to be sure, but where they are present they are expressions of character. The magnanimous man then is worth a great deal, and takes himself for all that he is worth. He has *received God's spirit*—or something analogous in the natural order to the gift of the Holy Ghost—that *he may know the things that are given him of God* (II Cor. ii, 12).

We must not conceive the magnanimous man to be a god to himself, wrapt up in the contemplation of his own excellences. Being high in all virtue he is far from being wanting in the virtue of religion. He glorifies God for whatever he has, and owns it all to be the gift of God. His high thoughts turn not about himself, but about God. He is lofty minded for what he discerns in God primarily, and secondarily in himself by the sheer gift and grace of God. And here we have the defence of the magnanimous man meeting a grave impeachment preferred against him. It has been

said of him that he is certainly not conscious of any ideal that he can not reach—not at all the man to confess that *when we have done all things we are still useless servants* (Luke xvii, 10). This is said with some apparent reference to a sermon of Newman, "Discourses to Mixed Congregations," on "The Religion of the Pharisee." The Pharisee is there presented as having an ideal and having come up to it, and consequently living in serene self-complacency. By this argument the magnanimous man would be a self-righteous Pharisee, far removed from the standard of Him who was *meek and humble of heart* (Matt. xi, 29). The accusation may be leveled with some justice against the pagan magnanimous man depicted in the pages of Aristotle. Aristotle thought of man in relation to man, not in relation to God, and described and classified his virtues accordingly from a human, social standpoint. He saw no harm in a man who was much the superior of his fellows making the most of that superiority, and glorying *in himself as of himself*. St. Paul, better taught of God, thought otherwise (II Cor. iii, 5). Everything good in man comes from God; and when it is all reckoned up, human goodness does not come to much in the sight of God. *Shall man be justified in comparison with God? Lo, the stars are not pure in his sight; how much more is man rottenness, and the son of man a worm!* (Job xxv, 4-6). True magnanimity, that is to say, the magnanimity that parts not company with humility, but coalesces with it in the unity of one virtue, bears honours gracefully, and insult unflinchingly, from a consciousness of internal worth. *This is our glory*, says St. Paul, *the testimony of our conscience* (II Cor. i, 12). This internal worth, however, the magnanimous man refers to the source from whence it comes, and unto God he gives the glory. The secret of his marvelous virtue is his habit of practical discernment between the abyss of nothingness within himself and

the high gifts, also within him, which come of the bounty of God. Magnanimity, and therefore also humility, imports grandeur and elevation of mind. The magnanimously humble man thinks a great deal of God, and not too much of man, whether of himself or of his neighbours. He is clear of the weakness of human respect. He is not afraid of men, least of all wicked men. *In his sight the malignant is brought to nothing* (Ps. xiv, 4). As Aristotle humorously puts it, "he is not the man to bolt and run away, swinging his arms." He harbors in his heart a certain noble scorn for the impertinence of aggressive wickedness and the pomp and pride of evil powers. He takes a trifle for a trifle, and a fool for a fool. He is not easily excited. He will meddle only with big things, and with little things as they bear on big things. Altogether, the magnanimous man is a formidable antagonist to the powers of evil. When the official of a persecuting government said to St. Basil, "I never met a man so unmanageable as you are," the saint replied, "Perhaps you have never yet met with a Bishop." He is known in the Church as *S. Basilus Magnus*, which may be rendered *St. Basil the Magnanimous*.

Of humility the pagan world had little or no conception. They had not so much as a name for it. Christianity had to coin a Greek name, and to elevate the meaning of the Latin word *humilitas*, which signified originally *baseness, meanness*. The nearest pagan equivalent for humility was a virtue which they named modesty, or good form: it consisted in not taking airs and making yourself offensive by swaggering in company. This overlooking of humility was due to the imperfection of pagan ideas about God. The gods of the ancient world gave poor examples of morality: they were not holy gods, but powerful beings who used their power to their own gratification. *Walk before me and be perfect*, as God said to

Abraham (Gen. xvii, 1), would have sounded a strange precept given by a pagan deity to pagan ears. Consequently the pagan was little in the habit of contrasting his own moral weaknesses with the transcendent holiness of the Supreme Being. Many a pagan must have thought that in point of moral goodness Jupiter and Apollo were not his superiors: they were materially better off than their worshiper, not holier. In fact the pagans regarded their gods much as the poor nowadays regard the rich. Humility is not inspired by an attitude of mind like that. The ground of humility is the utter inferiority of human nature to the divine, and man's dependence upon God for all that he has, even his very existence. "Humility," says St. Thomas, "seems principally to imply subjection to God: humility principally regards the reverence whereby man is subject to God." Humility then is the proper posture for every created mind to assume in presence of its Creator. To say that man is created to pay to God reverence and obedience, is to say that man is created to be humble. The first of the beatitudes, *blessed are the poor in spirit* (Matt. v, 3), is a blessing on the humble. The *poor in spirit*, says St. John Chrysostom, are the humble and contrite of heart; and he quotes for this explanation Isaiah xxvi, 2: *Upon whom shall I look but upon him that is poor and contrite of spirit, and trembleth at my words?* The *fear of the Lord*, so continually extolled in the Old Testament, is nothing else than humility. Of the sinner whose foot is the *foot of pride*, it is said: *The fear of the Lord is not before his eyes* (Ps. xxxv, 2, 12).

Both humility and pride consist in habits of mind rather than in habits of external conduct. When it comes to outward behaviour, humility shows itself as obedience, pride as disobedience. Children in confession accuse themselves of "pride," meaning disobedience:

therein these little ones are good theologians. Inculcating humility St. Peter wrote: *Be ye subject to every human creature for God's sake, whether to the king as excelling, or to governors as sent by him . . . fear God, honour the king* (I Pet. ii, 13-17). How far men generally are from honoring authorities in Church and State for God's sake; how the fear of God is ceasing to be before the eyes of men, is patent to every observer. Such is the fruit of a godless education, which is truly an education in pride. Humility, as we have seen, was not on the list of pagan virtues. We are lapsing into paganism. It is more and more the way of the world to put man in the place of God. Where this substitution becomes complete, humility vanishes, and pride takes its place, pride and disobedience and anarchy. Such is the way of Antichrist, *the man of sin, the wicked one*, or more literally, *the man of lawlessness, the lawless one, who is lifted up above all that is called God, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God* (II Thess. ii, 3, 4, 8). When God is put out of His place as governor of human society, and man will hear but of man alone, when reverence is perished off the earth, and fear of super-human powers, and awe of a world to come, the ground is prepared for socialism. Socialism will not be built four-square on the cardinal virtues; it will not rest on Christ the Rock, but on *the sand* of incoherent speeches, and violence, and blasphemy. When Socialism is set up we may look for *the rain* and *the floods*, and *the winds*, and the *great fall* (Matt. vii, 26, 27).

Whatever man be in comparison with his fellowman, he is little enough compared with God. This is motive for humility even for the highest and holiest of creatures. We sinners on earth have the further motive of our sins, and not only our sins, but what is almost more humiliating, our proneness to sin; and besides our

sinfulness, our ignorance. We know so little, we can know so little, that school after school of philosophers have fallen into the plausible error of maintaining that the human mind has no hold whatever on truth as it really is, but wanders in an enchanted maze which it has constructed for itself. The Church has never countenanced that sceptical, idealist philosophy. Indeed the transition is easy from ignorance to omniscience. The position that man knows nothing of reality may be amplified into this, that there is no reality anywhere outside and away from human thought: then man's thought constitutes all that can be called reality, and man is as God, author of all, knowing all. The orthodox view, which is also the view taken by ordinary mankind, is that man does know a little truth, touching the world and its Creator; but for one thing that man knows there are a thousand things beyond his conjecture, known only to God, who knows all. Man, then, is very ignorant before God, in his present condition. The reward promised to his fidelity is the sight of God, which will be the dispelling of his ignorance, so far as ignorance can be dispelled from a finite mind. To aid man to this goal, God has been pleased to reveal to him sundry truths, some of which he could not have found out for himself at all while others he might have found, but could not have held with firm certainty. These are the truths of the Christian revelation, embodied in the Creed. So learning them, man is, as our Saviour says, quoting Isaias, *taught of God* (John vi, 45; Isai. xiv, 13). He is as a child in God's school, God's school being the Church. The first requisite in a pupil is docility. God expects man to lend a docile ear to His teaching as given in the Church. *Unless ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever shall humble himself as this child, he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven* (Matt. xviii, 3, 4). This virtue whereby we

receive the teaching of God in the Church is called faith. The faith of an intellectual man is a great abasement of his understanding before God, a great act of humility, in these days especially, when science is widening and criticism is so keen. Yet after all it is not science, not criticism, that makes the difficulty of faith, but the neglect of prayer. Prayer is essentially an act of reverence to God, and therefore of humility: it is a profession of our total dependence on Him, a confession of our own insufficiency and consequent need of Him: it is usually a confession of our sins besides and an imploring of His pardon. Humility begets humility. The humility of prayer engenders and fosters the humility of faith. If a learned man loses his faith, it is not because of his learning as such, but because much study has left him prayerless. At the same time it must be confessed that study and mental acumen, as they remove many difficulties against faith—the shallow cavillings of the half-educated—so they raise other difficulties. As you mount the hill you see other hills, which from the valley you do not see. Therefore, as the high-strung, nervous organism needs much prayer to withstand sensual temptation, so the highly trained intellect needs prayer and Sacraments in abundance to surmount what God detests even beyond sensuality, namely, intellectual pride. Through such pride fell Lucifer. The intellect that comes nearest the angels must have a care that it, too, imitate not the sin of the angels. A keen inquirer must ever remember that, unlike science, faith is no intuition of genius, no product of elaborate reasoning, but is ultimately an obedience to the voice of God speaking in the heart, which voice must be heard in all humility. The ear of the proud is deaf to that still, small voice. To the Pharisees, because of their pride, Our Saviour said: *Ye shall seek me and not find me, and where I go ye can not come* (John vii, 34).

Finally, I must repeat, humility, obedience, faith are ever high-minded and noble hearted, because they bring one in touch with God. The *author and finisher of our faith*, who *endured the Cross and despised the shame*, and now *sitteth at the right hand of the throne of God* (Heb. xii, 2), He who was *meek and humble of heart* (Matt. xi, 29), is likewise the typical magnanimous man.

XII. THE INFUSED VIRTUES

By nature we have capacities and predispositions towards virtue, which capacities and predispositions are by practice converted into habits; these habits are the "acquired virtues." Such "acquired virtues" have been our theme hitherto. Now we must note two further points about them. First, in many men they are very ill acquired. The habit of sobriety, of veracity, of honesty, of fortitude, in many a subject is a crude, ill-baked thing; a little temptation breaks through it, and your teetotaler is taken up for drunkenness, your honest cashier is in prison for embezzlement. Human nature on the whole sadly needs to have its virtues reinforced. The "infused virtues," as we shall see, are a reinforcement to the "acquired." Secondly, no amount of virtue acquired by mere effort of nature will ever take a man to heaven, or win for him any reward there. Heaven means the vision of God, and that vision is simply out of range of all creatures' unaided strivings. The vision of God is not due either to the dignity or to the natural merits of any creature that God can possibly create, let alone man. It is a pure grace and gratuitous favour done to any creature who attains it. None but God Himself has a connatural right to see God. As the end to be attained is a grace, so the means to the attainment must consist of graces also. Such graces are the "infused virtues." No infused virtues, no heaven.

The infused virtues, of which I am about to treat, are faith, hope, and charity. Theologians complicate the matter by additions too subtle to be gone into here, and not very profitable for practice. These three virtues are infused in Baptism. Saying that, I do not mean to say that they can exist only in the baptized, but Baptism is

the ordinary means of their infusion. Baptism, then, puts into the soul a power to believe in the word of God revealing, a power to hope in the promise of God proffering to man the vision of Himself in heaven, and a power to love God above all things as a child loves its father, for in Baptism we are made adopted children of God and heirs of heaven, neither of which things are we by nature, or merely by being men. It will be seen that an infused virtue is not so much a habit as a power. The three infused virtues bestowed in Baptism are as three new faculties. Man is not born with the faculty of making his way to heaven. It is given him when he is baptized.

These new faculties,—faculties of what St. Paul (Eph. iv, 24) calls *the new man*, created in Baptism,—like other faculties, need exercise, else they perish of atrophy. The baptized child is disposed to believe, but he knows not what to believe until he learns his Catechism. He can not love an unknown God, nor hope for a heaven of which he has never been told. He has to be taught to make acts of faith, hope, and charity; and all his life long the oftener he elicits those acts with God's grace, the more robust do the infused virtues grow in him. By utter neglect of such acts he may become, not entirely, but in many respects, as though he had no infused virtues, as though he had never been baptized, he may become *as the heathen and the publican* (Matt. xviii, 17).

Young Christians generally, as might be expected, and not a few of longer standing, are strong in "infused virtues," but very weak in the "acquired virtues." They believe and hope abundantly, but as they too rarely exercise the acts, so neither have they acquired the habits of truthfulness, abstinence, sobriety, meekness, justice, obedience. This is no situation to acquiesce in. To acquiesce in it were to fall into the heresy called Antinomianism, which means faith without works.

The Christian, being bound to keep the Commandments, is bound in many various ways and recurring occasions to be just, temperate, brave and prudent. Thus, if he is faithful to his obligations, he forms in himself, whether he think of it or not, the habits of the cardinal virtues. A child may be excused for not possessing those virtues; he has not yet had time to form the habits. But the absence of the said virtues in a grown man, who has truly come to man's estate, having a man's knowledge and a man's appreciation of the law, argues in him a culpable neglect of acts which in many contingencies must have been incumbent upon him as duties. Neither the "infused virtues" should exist in a grown man without the "acquired virtues," nor the "acquired" virtues without the "infused"; neither faith without works, nor works without faith. We notice in the epistles of SS. Paul, Peter and John, traces of a disposition on the part of some early Christians to scorn the "acquired virtues" in the exuberance of the felt graces of their Baptism. This mistaken neglect of the natural order the Apostles were at pains to correct. (See Romans xiii, 1-8; I Cor. v, 1-6, 9, 10; x, 1-12; Gal. v, 13-21; I Pet ii, 13-18; I John ii, 3-6.) This also seems to be the main scope of the epistle of St. James. The Christian is a man sublimated. He ceases not to be a man and should have the virtues of a man. Grace does not abolish ethics. The office of "infused virtues" is to foster and take command of "acquired virtues," and raise their acts to a higher order.

When to the proper motive of an "acquired virtue" there is super-added the motive of an "infused virtue," the act thence resulting is said to be *elicited* by the acquired, or natural, virtue, and *commanded* by the supernatural, or infused virtue. As a rule, in a man leading a Christian life, all the acts *elicited* by his acquired virtues are *commanded* by his infused virtues. Thus if he prays, which is an act of

religion, he is led to pray by motives of faith and hope in Christ. Martyrdom, *elicited* by fortitude, is *commanded* by charity. It is only by being *commanded*, at least habitually, by charity that the virtuous acts of man become meritorious of heaven. The "acquired virtues," as such, qualify for well-being on earth. The "infused virtues," and the "acquired" as *commanded* by the "infused," qualify for happiness in heaven. Further, as we have seen, the "infused" virtues fortify the "acquired."

The "infused virtues" are the care of the Church; the "acquired virtues" are the care, although not the exclusive care, of the State, as such. I say *as such*, because a Christian State in concert with the Church will have some concern about the infused virtues. The State's direct care of virtue is limited to "overt acts" of the same. An "overt act" is defined "an act which externally manifests the disposition of the mind." Virtues are as oil to the machinery of government. In so far as they are needed as an aid to government and social order, they are called "civil virtues." It must be confessed that the necessary standard of civil virtue is not very high. A man may be a good citizen, yet not a good man, still less a good Catholic. On the other hand, no State can get on without a certain measure of goodness and virtue among its people. Every government must trust some of its subjects; the ruler can not constrain everybody, nor oversee every official's doings, there must be some fortitude, some justice, some temperance and self-restraint away from the eye of the policeman. And besides, who shall police the police? Who shall answer for the fidelity of the soldiers? A State may become so morally rotten as scarcely to hold together as a State: then it perishes under the first strong arm raised against it either from without or from within. Both Church and State have a common interest in making the citizens virtuous up to a certain point. Beyond that

point the Church will wish to raise them to a still higher virtue; but the State, if it be not a Christian State, is apt to hang back, to consider the Church importunate, meddlesome, punctilious and scrupulous, and even actually to thwart its efforts. Thereupon Church and State fall out. We see this in the matter of marriage laws, and above all in the education question. The State subsidized school refuses to have Christian Catholic morality and piety inculcated within its walls. It opens its doors only to "Biblical morality," whatever that may mean, or "simple ethics."

Without insisting on the divine mission of the Church, which the heathen statesman will not admit, this practical consideration may be advanced to move even a heathen. Whatever ideal of conduct you put up, you may make up your mind that the multitude will fall short of it in practice. You must propose a high ideal to get the mass of mankind to be even moderately virtuous. Schoolmasters forget this, who will not have their charge made "too pious." Preachers forget it, who are fond of expatiating on the topic how little after all Christ requires of a layman in the world,—albeit surely the layman must be Christ's disciple, and Christ's condition of discipleship is to *renounce all things* (Luke xiv, 33). Now the Church's ideal of virtue is a high ideal. The State's ideal of virtue is a low one. Train men to the Christian standard, and you may reasonably expect them not to fall short of that human standard which must be attained for the decent well-being of civil society. He will stop far short of murder, who dreads violent hatred as a mortal sin for which he may lose his soul (Matt. v, 21-26). He will not commit adultery, who is taught to abhor a lustful glance (Matt. v, 27-30). He will not swear a false oath in court who boggles at an unnecessary one (Matt. v, 33-37). He who loves his enemy will not fail his friend, nor be an enemy of lawful government (Matt. v, 43-47). A man

who seriously aims at perfection will not be a bad citizen (Matt. v, 48). But preach an easy and lax morality, just sufficient for State purposes, and what sort of practice can you expect? That which you get in sundry godless schools, where the State, thinking to subsidize education, is really subsidizing crime, and the coming socialism.

It remains to consider the motives of virtue. Why be virtuous at all? Like any other skill, virtue is acquired by training and self-denial. It is far easier to be vicious; and though vice itself be not pleasant, inasmuch as it makes a slave of a man, anyhow the acts that lead to vice are alluring enough. The Aristotelian motive for any virtuous act is its being the *kalon*, the right thing. Of this motive I desire to speak with all respect. I admit its potency. Hundreds of heroic deeds have been done with scarce any other motive than this, that it was the right thing to do. "Duty," or "the right thing," has exercised a marvelous sway over human hearts. It has been obeyed without its claims being questioned, or its title verified. Still, quite as often, it is flouted and disobeyed. Sceptics have analyzed it, and some have found to their own satisfaction that duty is only pleasure in disguise; whereupon many prefer pleasure undisguised. Any strengthening of the motive of virtue is of the highest value to mankind. Such strength is afforded by the infused virtues of faith and charity. They propose, not an abstract *kalon*, but a personal *kalos*,—One who is all beautiful, all lovable, all holy, because, being man, He is also God. The Christian aims at virtue for love of "the right thing," to be sure, but still more for love and imitation of the adorable person of his Saviour, the living Head of that living Body of which every Christian is a member; by incorporation in which he has grace to do all works of virtue requisite for salvation, and better than Melchisedech, who lived under the ancient dispensation,

to be *assimilated to the Son of God* (Heb. vii, 3). Enthusiasm for a person is wanted to eke out the intellectual grasp of a principle. Men will do for persons what they will never do for principles. An impersonal principle, whatever its philosophical merits, too often leaves the heart cold. We want personal enthusiasm to meet a crisis, and principle to insure stability. To meet both these wants, the Catholic Church holds up in her one hand charity and the Sacraments, in her other faith and the Creed. The virtuous Christian is characterized alike by clear knowledge of and steady adherence to the principles of faith and reason, and by steady loyalty to the person of his Saviour.

The essential idea of virtue is that of firmness and steadiness. Virtue is the corrective of impulse. The man of mere impulse may do many good and generous deeds, still he is not a good man, for the proneness to do good has not been engrafted on to his nature. This important psychological fact, that we are more inclined to act in some given way for having acted in that way before, the fact that having often acted in a certain way we arrive to a habit which inclines so to act always, except under quite abnormal circumstances,—this fact is the generator of the whole economy of virtues and vices. Of itself, in the right order of nature, it is a provision to steady our wills in good; incidentally, and by abuse, it may fix the will in evil. As habits form, man approaches to the condition of an angel, either of a good angel or of a devil. One act is said to make a fixed habit in an angel; many acts are needed to fix the more volatile will of man. Nor is the fixture ever quite perfect. You are never quite sure that the virtuous man will elicit his virtuous act every time that the occasion calls for it. His will always remains in some measure indeterminate and free, and his consequent action uncertain. Free will in man never passes away into charac-

ter. Thus plexus of habits, which is called character, never becomes the sole and adequate determinant of human conduct.

Some room is always left for effort and free choice. But undoubtedly the growth of virtues and vices does abridge the freedom of the will for better or for worse. It anticipates in some measure that fixed determination of the will to good, which obtains in the blessed in heaven; or to evil, in the case of the lost. Nor is it any loss of perfection,—nay, it is a higher freedom,—to have your will bent immovably upon good, so immovably that temptation, however clamorous, offers you no real inducement to act upon it. There are outrageous sins to which any decent man is never really tempted. He is above solicitation in that direction. That man would not be far above the level of a wild beast, who had to exert all the moral energy of his will, time after time, to restrain himself from cutting your throat. Growth in virtue gradually raises man above all deliberate sins, almost as much as the common man is raised above murder. Indeliberate acts, “sins of surprise,” as they are called, are an infirmity cleaving to man as long as he lives. They are not committed on principle. They are triumphs snatched by impulse from principle when principle is caught napping. But for the avoidance even of great sins the Christian, however perfect, must never rely upon his own acquired virtues. He must *watch and pray that he enter not into temptation* (Matt. xxvi, 41).

RICKABY J.J.

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